Perfect Party Foods | Cinco de Mayo Specialties

Taste of Home

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- Lemon prize-winners
- 23 luscious desserts
- Light & tasty chicken

30 never-fail main dishes



Lemonade Meringue Pie

Slice 'n' Bake Lemon Gems

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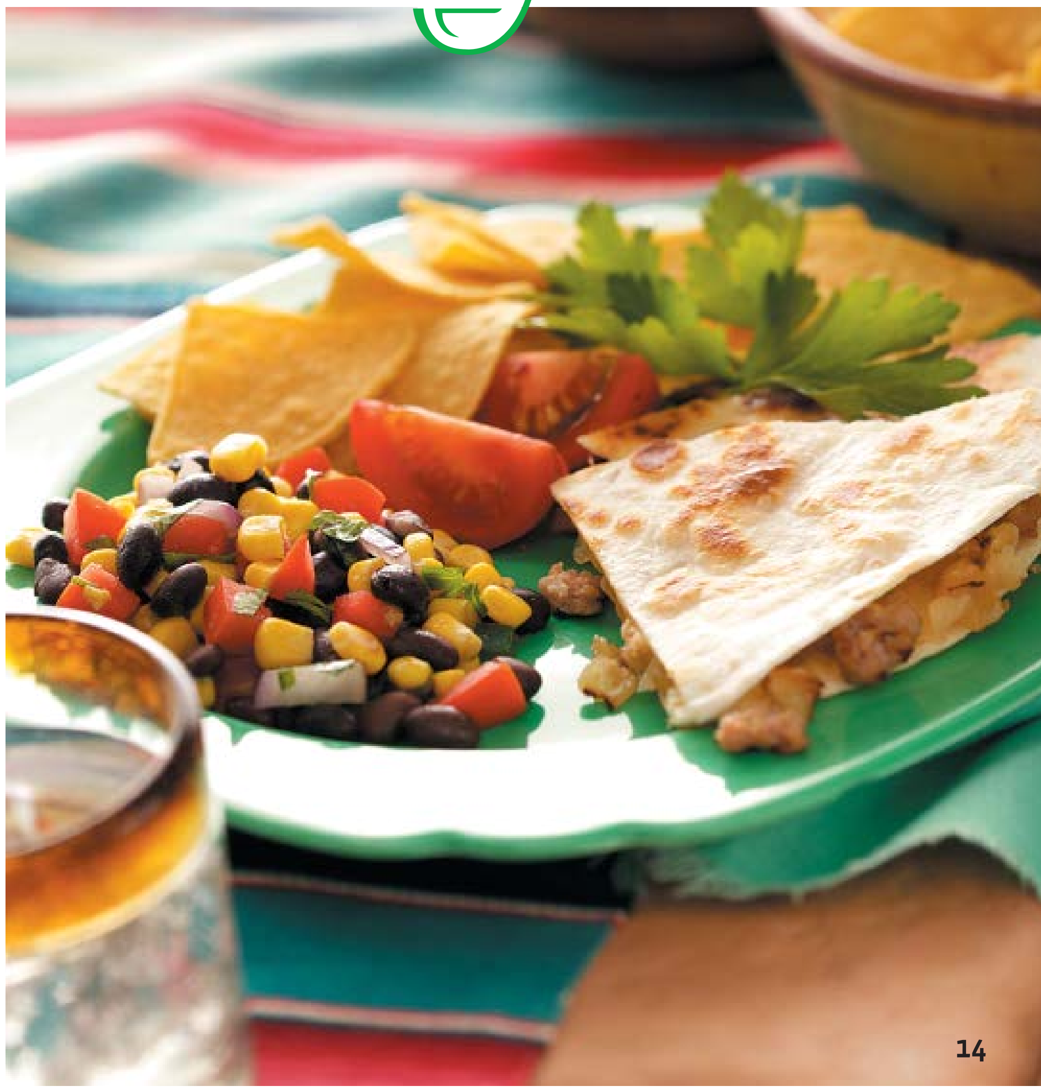
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Taste of Home





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37 THIS ISSUE'S CONTEST

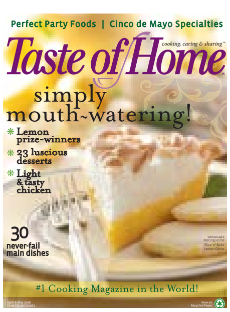
Lemon Lovers!

Plus more great recipes on handy cards









SERVED ON OUR COVER

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Slice 'n' Bake Lemon Gems
page 39

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SET STYLIST
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FOOD STYLIST
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JOYFUL SPRING FLAVORS

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An irresistible berry treat



Introducing Knorr Sides Plus Veggies. Two full servings of veggies in a delicious new side.

Tender broccoli florets. Tasty, garden spinach.
Vibrant greens delicately nestled in a bed of Rotini
with a light roasted garlic and olive oil sauce.
Knorr Sides Plus Veggies.
Now, get two servings of veggies in every pouch.





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Help find Tomás the Tiny Taco!

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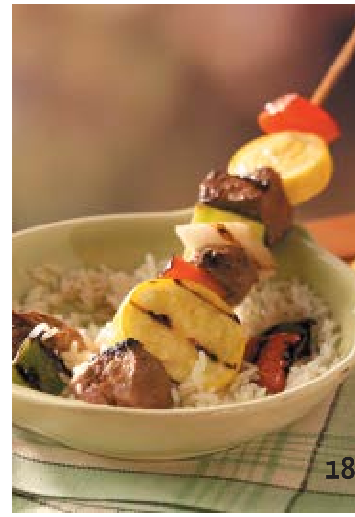


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Subscriber-only bonus recipes and features...

+ More popular Mexican recipes
+ Cinco de Mayo centerpiece
+ Tuxedo-themed dinner
+ Main-dish salads for spring
+ Extra 30-minute meals
+ Helpful cooking videos



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TABLE TALK

Putting the Squeeze on Lemons

Pucker up! It was a tough job, but somebody had to do it—well, at least that's what our staff claimed when we had to taste-test the delicious recipes for our "Lemon Lovers" contest. Our Test Kitchen cooks...

- Squeezed more than 100 tablespoons of lemon juice
- Grated 50-some teaspoons of lemon peel
- Went through more than 5 dozen lemons preparing the winners.

You'll see the delectable crop of citrus-inspired recipes on our cover and starting on page 37.

Win Cash for Cute Cookies



Just a quick reminder that our "Cute Cookies" contest closes on April 15, 2008. So hurry with your entries. Send a good photo of the eye-catching cookies you create. Prizes of $300, $200 and $100 will be awarded in each of three categories: Cutouts and Shapes, 3-Dimensional and Refrigerator Cookies. Check page 73 of the Feb/Mar *Taste of Home* for details and rules, or find them under the "Contests" tab on our Web site.

Lively Cooking Classes



"Teaching 220 high school students how to cook and eat healthy is quite a challenge, but *Taste of Home* is a great help," writes Joseph Powell, culinary arts/food education instructor at Lynwood High School in Lynwood, California. "I got our library to subscribe to *Taste of Home* and *Simple & Delicious*, which are two of my main resources for a wide variety of truly delicious and easy-to-prepare recipes. The pictures are a motivator to the students when they see how colorful and appetizing they are.

"My students are 88 percent Latino, 10 percent African-American and 2 percent Pacific Islander and Laotian. Fast foods dominate their diets, along with ethnic foods eaten at home. I try to expose them to tasty foods they've never tried, encouraging them to eat healthier, and to appreciate other traditional and regional cuisines in America.



Joe Powell (in red hat) and his culinary students prepared a holiday buffet for 250 teachers and staff.

"Just wanted to say thank you for your terrific recipes, magazines and Web site. You folks do a terrific job."

Paging through this fresh issue, you're bound to find great-tasting recipes for your special spring occasions and everyday meals. Have fun cooking!

—The *Taste of Home* Staff
editors@tasteofhome.com

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food, friends, family and more...
www.tasteofhome.com

Connect with thousands of fellow readers from across the U.S. and Canada who share your passion for good food. They're all just a mouse click away in the *Taste of Home* on-line community.

If you haven't visited our Web site recently, you're in for a real treat. Of course, you'll find great recipes (over 30,000 of them!), colorful photos and helpful tips. But what makes the *Taste of Home* Web site different from all other food sites is our lively on-line community. It's friendly, fast-paced and fun!



Search **over 30,000 tested recipes** for one that's perfect for you—whether for an everyday meal or special occasion. It's quick and easy!

Find out when one of our lively ***Taste of Home* Cooking School** programs will be coming to your area.





Watch a video on making beautiful meringues, like the one on our cover pie. And check our video listing for more helpful how-to's.

Check out the mouth-watering **"Recipes of the Day"**—just right for the season!





While on-line, don't forget to visit **ShopTasteofHome.com**, your one-stop shop for gadgets, cookware, cookbooks and more!



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Community

- join spirited discussions
- connect with friends, old and new
- chat with fellow readers
- share stories, recipes and tips
- plan dinner or your next party

My Page

- show off your favorite recipes
- post photos
- share interests with friends and fans
- start your own recipe box

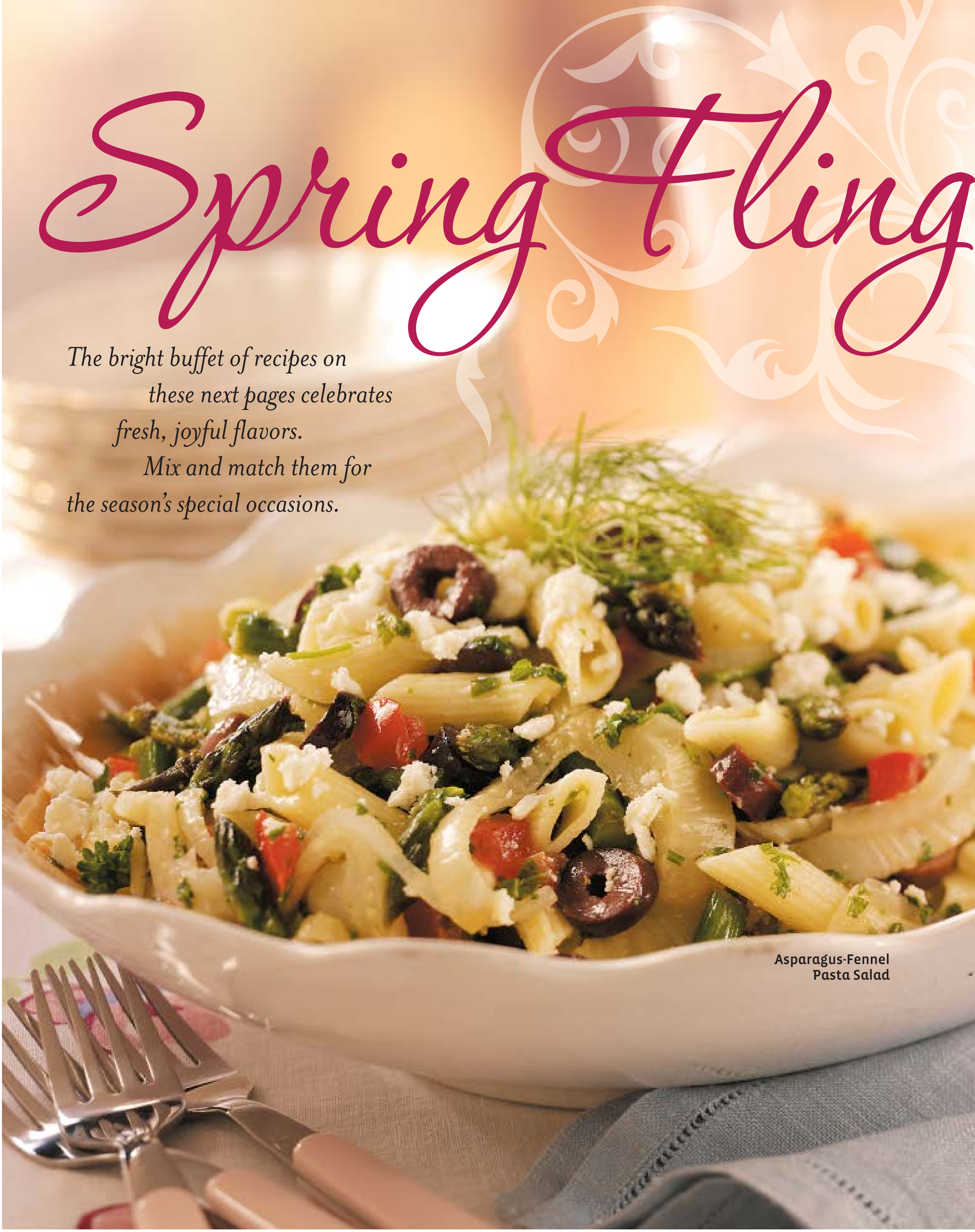
Subscriber-only exclusives

Look for this symbol on the pages of *Taste of Home* for added on-line content reserved for our faithful subscribers, including a tuxedo-themed menu to tip your hat to.



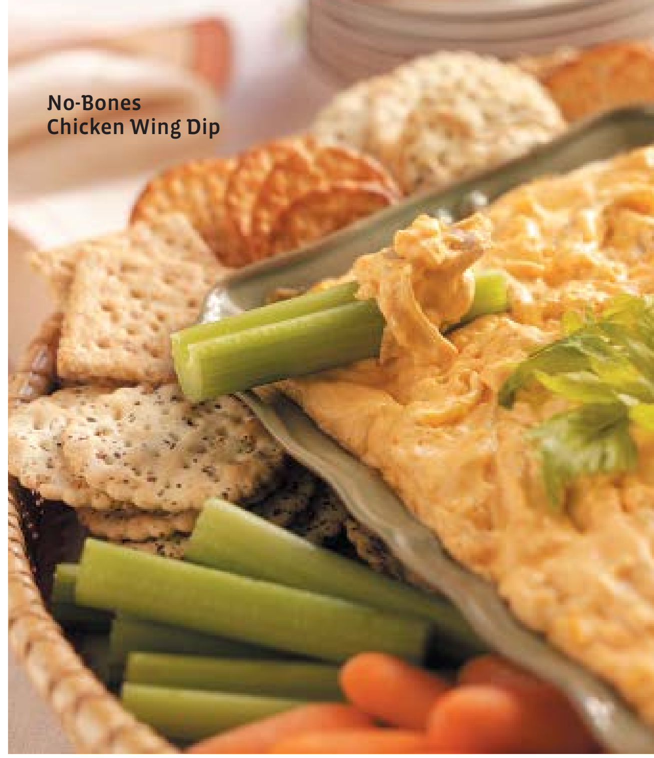
Spring Fling

The bright buffet of recipes on these next pages celebrates fresh, joyful flavors. Mix and match them for the season's special occasions.



Asparagus-Fennel Pasta Salad


Mini Chicken Salad Croissants


No-Bones Chicken Wing Dip

Asparagus-Fennel Pasta Salad *(Photo on page 7)*

PREP: 25 min. | COOK: 20 min.

Linda Lacek
Winter Park, Florida

Asparagus delivers delightful spring flavor in this hearty side salad. Served warm, it includes a wonderful mix of fresh-tasting ingredients.

- 1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 2 medium onions, halved and thinly sliced
- 1 small fennel bulb, sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 8 ounces uncooked penne pasta
- 4 medium tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 12 pitted Greek olives, sliced
- 1 cup minced fresh parsley

VINAIGRETTE:

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup (4 ounces) crumbled feta cheese

Place asparagus, onions and fennel in a 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Drizzle with oil; toss to coat. Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until lightly browned and crisp-tender, stirring occasionally.

Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and place in a large serving bowl. Add the tomatoes, olives, parsley and roasted vegetables.

In a small bowl, whisk the oil, lemon juice, garlic, mustard, salt and pepper until blended. Drizzle over salad and toss to coat. Sprinkle with feta cheese. **Yield:** 14 servings.

Mini Chicken Salad Croissants

PREP: 20 min. + chilling

Patricia Tjugum
Tomahawk, Wisconsin

"Great for a cookout or other get-together, this popular chicken salad could also be served on lettuce or on a slice of cantaloupe or honeydew melon. When there are kids in the crowd, I often substitute halved red seedless grapes for the peppers."

- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 4 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3 cups cubed cooked chicken
- 4 celery ribs, thinly sliced
- 1 cup chopped fresh mushrooms
- 1/4 cup chopped green pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped sweet red pepper
- 4 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans, toasted
- 20 lettuce leaves
- 20 miniature croissants, split

In a small bowl, combine the sour cream, mayonnaise, lemon juice, salt and pepper. In a large bowl, combine the chicken, celery, mushrooms and peppers; stir in sour cream mixture until combined. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

Just before serving, stir in the bacon and pecans. Spoon 1/4 cup chicken salad onto each lettuce-lined croissant. **Yield:** 20 sandwiches.

No-Bones Chicken Wing Dip

PREP: 15 min. | BAKE: 25 min.

Shirley Gawlik
Oakfield, New York

"This popular, warm party dip delivers the great flavor of the hot wings we love to snack on—but without any bones!" Plus, the recipe makes a big batch so you won't run out!

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream
- 1 cup blue cheese salad dressing
- 1/2 cup buffalo wing sauce
- 2-1/2 cups shredded cooked chicken
- 1 block (8 ounces) provolone cheese, shredded

Baby carrots, celery ribs and crackers

In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, sour cream, salad dressing and buffalo wing sauce until blended. Stir in chicken and provolone cheese.

Transfer to a greased 2-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until hot and bubbly. Serve warm with carrots, celery and crackers. **Yield:** 6-1/2 cups.

Shredded Beef 'n' Slaw Sandwiches

PREP: 20 min. | COOK: 2-3/4 hours

Mary Johnson
Whitehouse, Ohio

"I have served these tangy, filling sandwiches for family gatherings and many a work crew. They have always gone over quite well."

- **4** **pounds beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch cubes**
- **2** **cups water**
- **2** **cups ketchup**
- **1/2** **to 3/4 cup Worcestershire sauce**
- **2** **tablespoons lemon juice**
- **2** **tablespoons prepared horseradish**
- **1** **tablespoon prepared mustard**
- **2** **teaspoons salt**
- **8** **cups shredded cabbage**
- **30** **sandwich buns, split**

In a Dutch oven, bring beef and water to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 2 hours or until tender.

Remove beef with a slotted spoon; shred with two forks and set aside. Skim fat from cooking liquid. Stir in the ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, lemon juice, horseradish, mustard and salt. Add the shredded beef and cabbage. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 45 minutes or until cabbage is tender.

Spoon 1/3 cup onto each sandwich bun. **Yield:** 30 sandwiches.

more Spring Fling >



Shredded Beef 'n' Slaw Sandwiches


Napa Cabbage Slaw


Texas Snack Mix


Creamy Orange Gelatin

Napa Cabbage Slaw

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 15 min.

Genise Krause
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin

Chow mein noodles and snow peas give a pleasant crunch to this colorful slaw. It's sure to be popular at parties and potlucks.

- **4 cups chopped napa *or* Chinese cabbage**
- **1 can (11 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained**
- **1 can (8 ounces) sliced water chestnuts, drained**
- **1 cup fresh snow peas, trimmed and cut into thirds**
- **1/2 cup chopped sweet red pepper**
- **1 green onion, chopped**
- **1/4 cup reduced-fat sesame ginger salad dressing**
- **1/2 cup chow mein noodles**

In a large bowl, combine the first six ingredients. Drizzle with dressing and toss to coat. Just before serving, sprinkle with chow mein noodles. **Yield:** 8 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 3/4 cup equals 140 calories, 5 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 171 mg sodium, 22 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 3 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 1 starch, 1 vegetable, 1 fat.

Texas Snack Mix

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 min.

Terri Newton
Marshall, Texas

Make this fun and easy snack mix in the microwave for a treat anytime. Add extra hot pepper sauce for more kick.

- **3 cups *each* Corn Chex, Wheat Chex and Rice Chex**
- **1 cup unsalted peanuts**
- **1 cup miniature pretzels**
- **1 cup cheese-flavored snack crackers**
- **1/4 cup butter, melted**
- **1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce**
- **2-1/2 teaspoons hot pepper sauce**
- **1-1/4 teaspoons seasoned salt**

In a large bowl, combine the cereal, peanuts, pretzels and crackers. In a small bowl, combine the butter, Worcestershire sauce, pepper sauce and seasoned salt; pour over cereal mixture.

Microwave in batches on high for 2 minutes, stirring three times. Spread onto waxed paper-lined baking sheets to cool. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** 3 quarts.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This recipe was tested in a 1,100-watt microwave.

Creamy Orange Gelatin

PREP: 20 min. + chilling

★ Sue Gronholz
Beaver Dam, Wisconsin

"After celebrating two graduations in less than a year, it was clear that this recipe was definitely everyone's favorite."

- **4 packages (3 ounces *each*) orange gelatin**
- **4 cups boiling water**
- **1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened**
- **1-1/2 cups orange juice**
- **2 cans (11 ounces *each*) mandarin oranges, drained**

In a large bowl, dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Stir in ice cream and orange juice until blended. Chill until partially set.

Fold in oranges. Pour into two 6-cup ring molds coated with cooking spray. Refrigerate overnight or until firm. Just before serving, unmold. **Yield:** 12 servings.

SATISFYING SALADS. Find four springtime main-dish salads at ***www.tasteofhome.com/plus.***



hats off to the graduate!

Congratulations Seniors Cake

PREP: 1 hour | BAKE: 45 min. + cooling

Sherri Frohlich
Benton, Arkansas

"I decorated a special cake for my son's high school graduation. Each of the characters had hair color and specifics for his group of friends."

- **1 package (18-1/4 ounces) yellow cake mix**
- **4 cups vanilla frosting**

Paste food coloring in colors of your choice

Prepare cake batter and bake according to package directions, using a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack to cool completely.

Level top of cake; place on a serving platter. Tint frosting desired colors; spread over top and sides of cake. Pipe a shell border, caps, gowns and desired message. **Yield:** 15-20 servings.

Diploma Sandwiches

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 min.

★ Sue Ross
Casa Grande, Arizona

"These easy sandwiches can be made ahead and chilled. Thinly sliced ham, turkey, beef and cheese are other options for the filling. I've also used halves of 6-inch tortillas to make smaller 'diplomas.'"

- **1 loaf (16 ounces) thin white sandwich bread, crusts removed**
- **2 cups prepared ham, tuna *or* chicken salad**

Whole chives *or* green onion tops

Flatten bread slices with a rolling pin. Spread a rounded tablespoonful of ham salad onto each slice of bread. Gently roll up; tie each with a chive. **Yield:** 22 sandwiches.

Graduation Punch

PREP: 15 min. + cooling

★ Deb Waggoner
Grand Island, Nebraska

"My mom served this punch when I graduated from high school, and I made it when my own kids graduated!"

- **1-1/2 cups sugar**
- **8 quarts water, *divided***
- **4 packages (.14 ounce *each*) unsweetened strawberry soft drink mix**
- **3 cans (6 ounces *each*) frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed**
- **2-1/4 cups lemonade concentrate**
- **2 cans (46 ounces *each*) unsweetened pineapple juice**
- **2 liters ginger ale, chilled**

In a large saucepan, combine sugar and 2 qts. water. Cook and stir over medium heat until sugar is dissolved. Remove from the heat; stir in soft drink mix. Cool completely.

Just before serving, divide the syrup between two large containers or punch bowls; add the concentrates, pineapple juice and remaining water to each. Stir in ginger ale. **Yield:** 3-3/4 gallons.

NUTRITION FACTS: 3/4 cup equals 66 calories, trace fat (trace saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 13 mg sodium, 17 g carbohydrate, trace fiber, trace protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGE:** 1 fruit.

*Goodies for Graduation. Please share your graduation party recipes. Visit **www.tasteofhome.com**.*



Congratulations Seniors Cake


Graduation Punch


Diploma Sandwiches

Food for Thought: Kites rise highest against the wind—not with it. —Winston Churchill



FIELD EDITOR:

Betsy Hedeman
Timonium, Maryland

FAMILY:
Betsy and husband William have two grown daughters, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

JOB:
Retired secretary and tour guide for the city of Baltimore

HOBBIES:
Collecting antique kitchen utensils

ACTIVITIES:
Maryland State Fair food judge. Her advice: "Make your jellies clear...your jams intense...your pickles with a bite...your pie crusts short...your cakes light and airy!"

GO AHEAD— BE "CRABBY"!
For Betsy's Seasoned Crab Cakes recipe, a winner in the Maryland Hard Crab Derby, go to *www.tasteofhome.com/plus.*

sunny lunch

On a beautiful spring or summer day, I love to host a luncheon on my screened porch. Good food and a casual fresh-air setting are always a treat—whether the group is my husband, Bill, and me with friends, or a "just us girls" get-together.

On the menu are Curried Carrot Soup, Ham on Biscuits, Chow Mein Chicken Salad and Creamy Lime Sherbet with Candied Flowers. (Find Betsy's recipes at right and on page 43.)

Curried Carrot Soup is full of flavor and such a pretty color. The curry is pleasant but not overpowering, and thyme adds another dimension. It's a wonderful starter.

"Remarkably good" is typical of what guests say about Chow Mein Chicken Salad. Crisp lettuce, toasted almonds and sesame seeds, and chow mein noodles make it nice and crunchy. I prep the ingredients the night before. A glass pint jar works great for shaking up the dressing.

Bringing Home Blue Ribbons

I've always had plenty of jars around the house. For many years, we had a large garden, and I canned pickles, preserves and more. Not to brag, but I brought home many blue ribbons from the Maryland State Fair.

When State Fair officials asked me to be a food judge, I was delighted. I was still allowed to enter any category that I would not judge.

Other than fair prizes, I've won about 15 food contests—for candy, veggies, salads and recipes using Maryland crabmeat. I've won the Pillsbury Pie Contest twice—with my damson plum and cherry pie recipes.

Instead of sandwiches for my luncheon, I like to serve Ham on Biscuits. I use Smithfield Southern cured ham, but whatever kind you like will taste great on the tender homemade biscuits.

Creamy Lime Sherbet is smooth and refreshing. While it's delicious on its own, dressing up the servings with Candied Flowers makes a lovely finale for a luncheon menu.

My daughters and granddaughters were delighted by and eager to know more about the flowers. To coat the petals with the meringue powder mixture, I use a kid's paintbrush. Yes, they are edible—delicate and delicious!

Not "Retired" from Cooking

I've recently retired from judging and competition at fairs. And Bill and I have moved from our home of 30 years into a retirement community. But once a cook, always a cook!

I quickly broke in the kitchen in our smaller quarters and got involved in soup parties, appetizer challenges and other food events here.

When *Taste of Home* arrives, I sit right down to read and digest the recipes. I'm still adding new ones to my bread box-size Plexiglas recipe file. I've always said, "If the house catches on fire, that box is the first thing I would grab."

I've compiled some of my favorites into a "Granny's Grub" recipe book for my granddaughters. I pulled this popular luncheon menu from my big box, too. Hope you enjoy it!

By Betsy Hedeman
Timonium, Maryland

"Good food and a casual fresh-air setting are always a treat."

Candied Flowers

PREP: 30 min. + standing

- **2** **teaspoons meringue powder**
- **2** **tablespoons water**
- **40** **to 50 edible blossoms *or* flower petals of your choice, such as pansies, edible orchids or rose petals**
- **1-1/4** **cups superfine sugar**

In a small bowl, dissolve meringue powder in water. Lightly brush over all sides of flowers to coat completely. Sprinkle with sugar. Let dry on a waxed paper-lined baking sheet for 1-2 days. Use as a garnish for dessert. **Yield:** 40-50 candied flowers.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Meringue powder is available from Wilton Industries, Inc. Call 1-800/794-5866 or visit *www.tasteofhome.com* for a Web site link. Make sure to properly identify flowers before picking. Double-check that they're edible and have not been treated with chemicals.

Recipes can be found on page 43



Creamy Lime Sherbet



CURRIED CARROT SOUP



HAM ON BISCUITS



CHOW MEIN CHICKEN SALAD

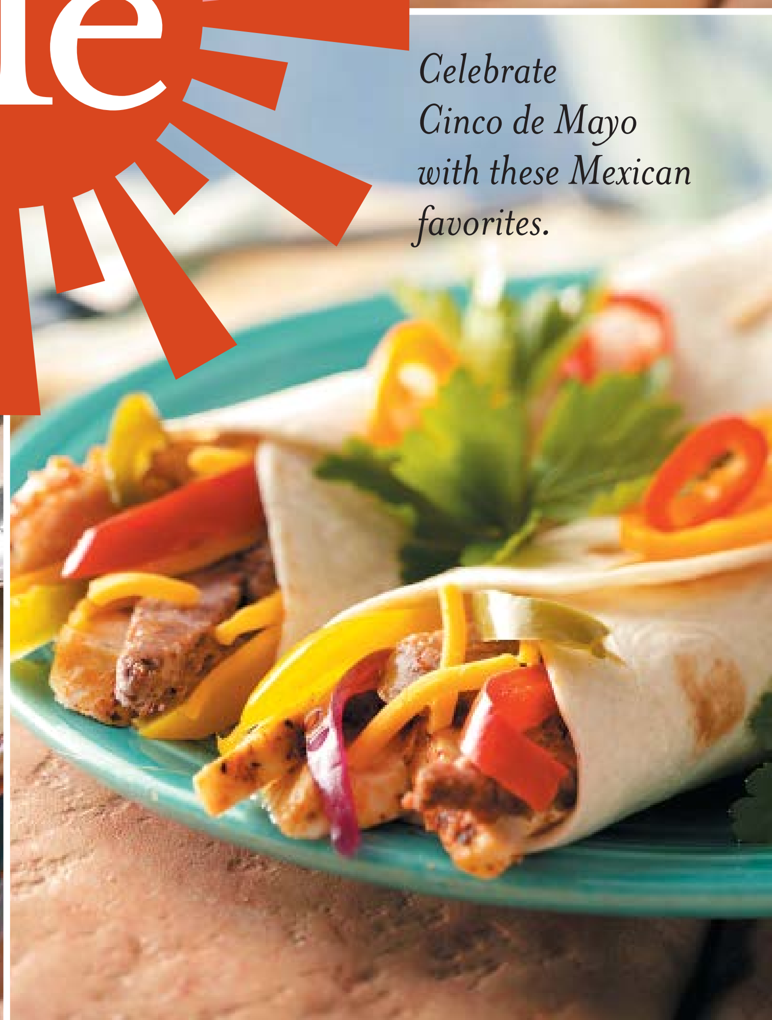




olé

Celebrate Cinco de Mayo with these Mexican favorites.





Clockwise from top left:
Fried Ice Cream
Corn 'n' Black Bean Salsa
Onion Sausage Quesadillas
Mixed Grill Fajitas
Fiesta Chicken Chowder

Here in the U.S., we've developed a hearty appetite for Mexican food, and many communities have adopted the Mexican holiday of Cinco de Mayo. It means "fifth of May" and commemorates Mexico's important victory over French invaders in 1862.

This selection of recipes from *Taste of Home* readers provides a bountiful buffet of traditional Mexican and Southwestern fare. Why not put on some mariachi music and get busy in the kitchen?

Fried Ice Cream

PREP: 20 min. + freezing | COOK: 5 min.

Kay Higgins
Madawaska, Maine

"I used to order this dessert at my favorite Mexican restaurant. I couldn't believe you could fry ice cream, but this recipe is delicious proof. Top it with honey, whipped cream or caramel ice cream topping."

- **3 cups vanilla ice cream**
- **1/4 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1-1/4 cups finely crushed graham crackers**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **Oil for deep-fat frying**

Using a 1/2-cup ice cream scoop, place six scoops of ice cream on a baking sheet. Freeze.

Place heavy cream in a shallow bowl. Combine cracker crumbs and cinnamon in another shallow bowl. Dip ice cream balls in cream, then roll in crumb mixture. Cover and freeze for at least 1 hour. Refrigerate remaining cream and set aside remaining crumb mixture.

Roll ice cream balls again in cream, then coat again with crumbs. Freeze for 15 minutes. In an electric skillet or deep-fat fryer, heat oil to 375°. Fry ice cream balls for 10-15 seconds or until lightly browned. Drain on paper towels. Serve immediately. **Yield**: 6 servings.

Onion Sausage Quesadillas

PREP: 30 min. | BAKE: 15 min.

Lisa Harrington
Halifax, Nova Scotia

"My husband and I created this recipe after we realized you could add anything to caramelized onions and it would taste great. These are easy to whip up, and the filling can be made ahead of time."

- **3 medium sweet onions, diced**
- **3 garlic cloves, minced**
- **2 tablespoons butter**
- **1 to 2 tablespoons brown sugar**
- **3/4 pound bulk Italian sausage**
- **1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese, *divided***
- **8 flour tortillas (8 inches)**

In a large skillet, cook onions and garlic in butter over medium heat until tender. Stir in brown sugar. Cook for 15-20 minutes or until onions are golden brown, stirring frequently; remove and keep warm.

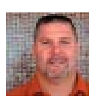
In the same skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain.

In a bowl, combine the sausage, 1 cup Swiss cheese and onion mixture. Place four tortillas on two greased baking sheets; sprinkle each with 1 tablespoon Swiss cheese. Top with sausage mixture and remaining cheese and tortillas.

Bake at 425° for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Cut each quesadilla into six wedges. Serve immediately. **Yield**: 2 dozen.

Corn 'n' Black Bean Salsa

PREP: 45 min.



Mike Bass
Alvin, Texas

"I'm a high school football coach who also likes to cook and garden. This salsa is really popular with my wife and our four kids, and when we entertain friends and fellow coaches."

- **2 cans (15-1/4 ounces *each*) whole kernel corn, drained**
- **2 cans (15 ounces *each*) black beans, rinsed and drained**
- **8 plum tomatoes, seeded and chopped**
- **1 medium red onion, chopped**
- **3/4 cup minced fresh cilantro**
- **4 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped**
- **1/4 cup lime juice**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **Tortilla chips**

In a large bowl, combine the first eight ingredients. Cover and refrigerate until serving. Serve with tortilla chips. **Yield**: 11 cups.

EDITOR'S NOTE: When cutting hot peppers, disposable gloves are recommended. Avoid touching your face.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1/4 cup (calculated without chips) equals 34 calories, trace fat (trace saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 118 mg sodium, 6 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 1 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGE:** 1/2 starch.

Fiesta Chicken Chowder

PREP: 30 min. | COOK: 15 min.

Beth Jenkins-Horsley
Belmont, North Carolina

"I entered this hearty soup recipe in a contest sponsored by my hometown newspaper, and I won first place. We enjoy it immensely, especially on chilly days."

- **3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1 envelope fajita seasoning, *divided***
- **1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch cubes**
- **3 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **3 cups water**
- **1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained**
- **1 can (14-1/2 ounces) Mexican stewed tomatoes, undrained**
- **1 can (11 ounces) Mexicorn, drained**
- **1 cup uncooked instant brown rice**
- **1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies**
- **1 can (11 ounces) condensed nacho cheese soup, undiluted**
- **3 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro**
- **1 tablespoon lime juice**

In a large resealable plastic bag, combine flour and 2 tablespoons fajita seasoning; add chicken. Seal bag and shake to coat. In a large saucepan, saute chicken in oil until juices run clear. Remove and keep warm.

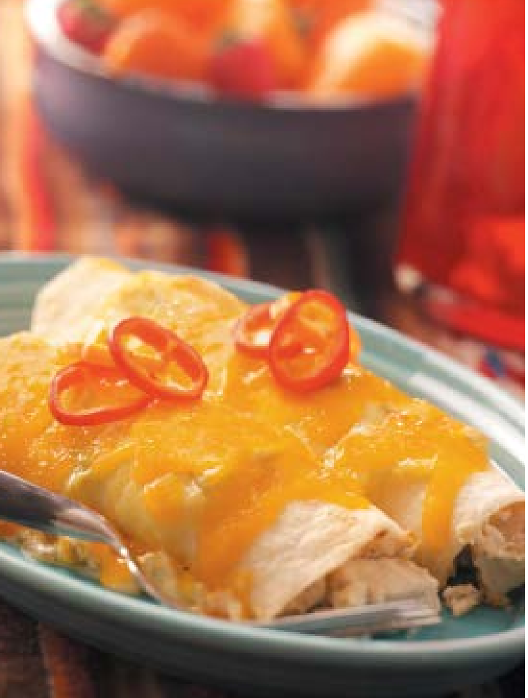
In the same pan, saute onion and garlic until onion is tender. Stir in the water, beans, tomatoes, corn, rice, chilies and remaining fajita seasoning. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 5 minutes or until rice is tender.

Stir in the soup, cilantro, lime juice and chicken; heat through. **Yield**: 10 servings (2-1/2 quarts).

more Cinco de Mayo recipes >



FESTIVE FLORAL TABLE TOPPER!
Learn to make an easy "Cinco de Mayo" centerpiece (right) and find more great Mexican recipes at *www.tasteofhome.com/plus*.


Creamy Chicken Enchiladas

Mixed Grill Fajitas *(page 14)*

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 min.

Karen Haen
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin

"Everyone loves these warm tortillas wrapped around the grilled meats, sauteed veggies and cheese. The recipe's an original with me, and through trial, I found you cannot make an error!"

- **1 *each* medium green, sweet red and yellow pepper, julienned**
- **2 medium red onions, sliced**
- **3 tablespoons olive oil**
- **1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream**
- **2 teaspoons ground cumin**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **1/2 teaspoon chili powder**
- **6 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (4 ounces *each*)**
- **3 Italian sausage links**
- **2 beef cube steaks (4 ounces *each*)**
- **24 flour tortillas (8 inches), warmed**
- **6 cups (24 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**

In a large skillet, saute peppers and onions in oil until tender; keep warm. In a small bowl, combine the sour cream, cumin and garlic; cover and refrigerate until serving.

Combine salt, pepper and chili powder; sprinkle over chicken, sausages and steaks. Grill chicken and sausages, covered, over medium heat for 5-8 minutes on each side or until no longer pink. Slice and keep warm.

Grill steaks, covered, over medium heat for 2-3 minutes on each side or until meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, a meat thermometer should read 145°; medium, 160°; well-done, 170°). Slice and keep warm.

Divide meats and vegetables among tortillas; sprinkle with cheese. Roll up; serve with sour cream mixture. **Yield**: 12 servings.

Food for Thought: The poets have been mysteriously silent on the subject of cheese. —G.K. Chesterton

Creamy Chicken Enchiladas

PREP: 30 min. | BAKE: 35 min.

Pat Coffee
Kingston, Washington

"My daughter, Lisa Sand, brought 10 pans of these tasty enchiladas to my wedding reception, and they were the biggest hit of all the food. So many wanted the recipe that we sent it out with our Christmas cards."

- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **2 tablespoons water**
- **2 teaspoons onion powder**
- **2 teaspoons ground cumin**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **5 cups diced cooked chicken**
- **20 flour tortillas (6 inches), room temperature**
- **2 cans (10-3/4 ounces *each*) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted**
- **2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream**
- **1 cup milk**
- **2 cans (4 ounces *each*) chopped green chilies**
- **2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**

In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, water, onion powder, cumin, salt and pepper until smooth. Stir in chicken.

Place 1/4 cup down the center of each tortilla. Roll up and place seam side down in two greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dishes. In a bowl, combine the soup, sour cream, milk and chilies; pour over enchiladas.

Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 30-40 minutes or until heated through. Sprinkle with cheddar cheese; bake 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. **Yield**: 10 servings.

Mexican Casserole

PREP: 20 min. | BAKE: 40 min.

David Mills
Indianapolis, Indiana

"Born out of a need to rid the fridge of extras, this recipe is so flexible. Add more corn to make it sweeter, if you like. You can also spice it up as hot as you want."

- **1-1/2 pounds ground beef**
- **1 envelope taco seasoning**
- **3/4 cup water**
- **1 can (16 ounces) refried beans**
- **1/2 cup salsa**
- **6 flour tortillas (6 inches)**
- **2 cups frozen corn, thawed**
- **2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**

Shredded lettuce, chopped tomatoes, sliced ripe olives and sour cream, optional

In a large skillet, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in taco seasoning and water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a microwave-safe bowl, combine the beans and salsa. Cover and microwave for 1-2 minutes or until spreadable.

Place three tortillas in a greased round 2-1/2-qt. baking dish. Layer with half of the beef, bean mixture, corn and cheese; repeat layers.

Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until cheese is melted. Let stand for 5 minutes. Serve with lettuce, tomatoes, olives and sour cream if desired. **Yield**: 6 servings.

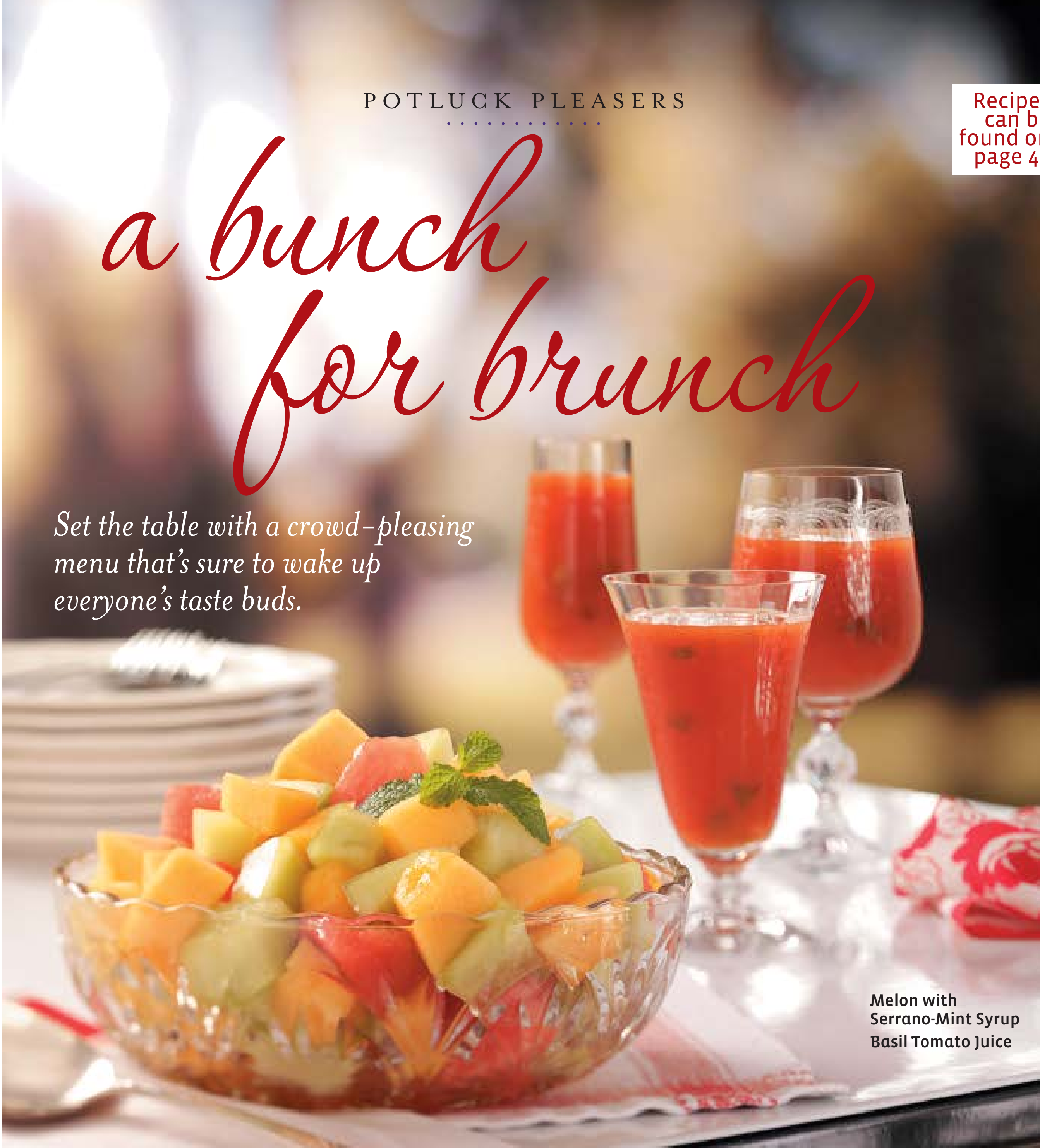
EDITOR'S NOTE: This recipe was tested in a 1,100-watt microwave.


Mexican Casserole

Recipes can be found on page 47

a bunch for brunch

Set the table with a crowd-pleasing menu that's sure to wake up everyone's taste buds.



Melon with Serrano-Mint Syrup
Basil Tomato Juice

Pass the Word! We want your plentiful potluck recipes and tips at ***www.tasteofhome.com****.*



DELUXE BREAKFAST BAKE



NUT-TOPPED STRAWBERRY RHUBARB MUFFINS

fresh-picked, flavor-packed

Homegrown fruits and veggies highlight her mom's good cooking.



"Mom has so many wonderful recipes that it was difficult to pick just four as her 'best.'"

Story by Kathy Spang
Manheim, Pennsylvania

My mom, Clara Kniss (left), would rather cook and bake than go out to eat. She even has the whole family over for dinner on Mother's Day!

Her love of cooking goes way back. The oldest of five children, Mom grew up on a farm. She learned to cook and bake from her mother and joined the 4-H Cooking Club. She still uses the white sauce recipe from her 4-H cookbook.

She learned the importance of fresh fruits and vegetables early on. So my sister, Karen, and I grew up enjoying the bounty from our grandparents' farm. In the summers, we spent a lot of time there while my dad, Jerry, was at work. Karen and I picked strawberries and green beans, and we tended the fruit and vegetable stand. Each week, we'd help stock and sell produce at the farmers market.

My mother would also freeze and can fruit and veggies, so we could enjoy their goodness all year long. Now that Karen and I are adults, Mom organizes a day to can peaches for our three families. We also freeze corn and make applesauce and strawberry jam every year.

Signature Corn Pie

This meal is full of the fresh flavors I've loved since childhood. Sizzling Beef Kabobs combines tender, marinated beef, squash, onion and sweet peppers. My dad, who's retired from a local steel company, does the grilling.

My mom's Lattice Corn Pie is a unique dish that reminds me of the farm. My grandfather often requested it for his birthday. Now I'm passing on this dish and the stories that go with it to our children, Luke and Kate. (My husband, Doug, is a nursing student; I teach seventh-grade math.)

The kids love easy Applesauce-Raspberry Gelatin Mold. It's cool and refreshing.

My sister learned to make Pavlova from her Australian mother-in-law. Then, my sister taught Mom. Fresh fruits, like my mom's homegrown pineapple, look beautiful on top of this dessert. Mom got the idea to grow pineapple one day when she remembered that her mom had tried to grow one. Now, she has several pineapple plants in the sunroom. When one of the fruits is ripe, she invites us over for a meal and pineapple tasting!

Close Ties

Because my sister and I live nearby, Mom invites our families over often and also hosts extended family for holidays and picnics.

We have a special bond with Mom, who is retired after 20 years in banking. She taught Karen and me to cook and bake.

We learned to use fresh fruits and vegetables whenever possible. And she was insistent that we measure accurately when baking.

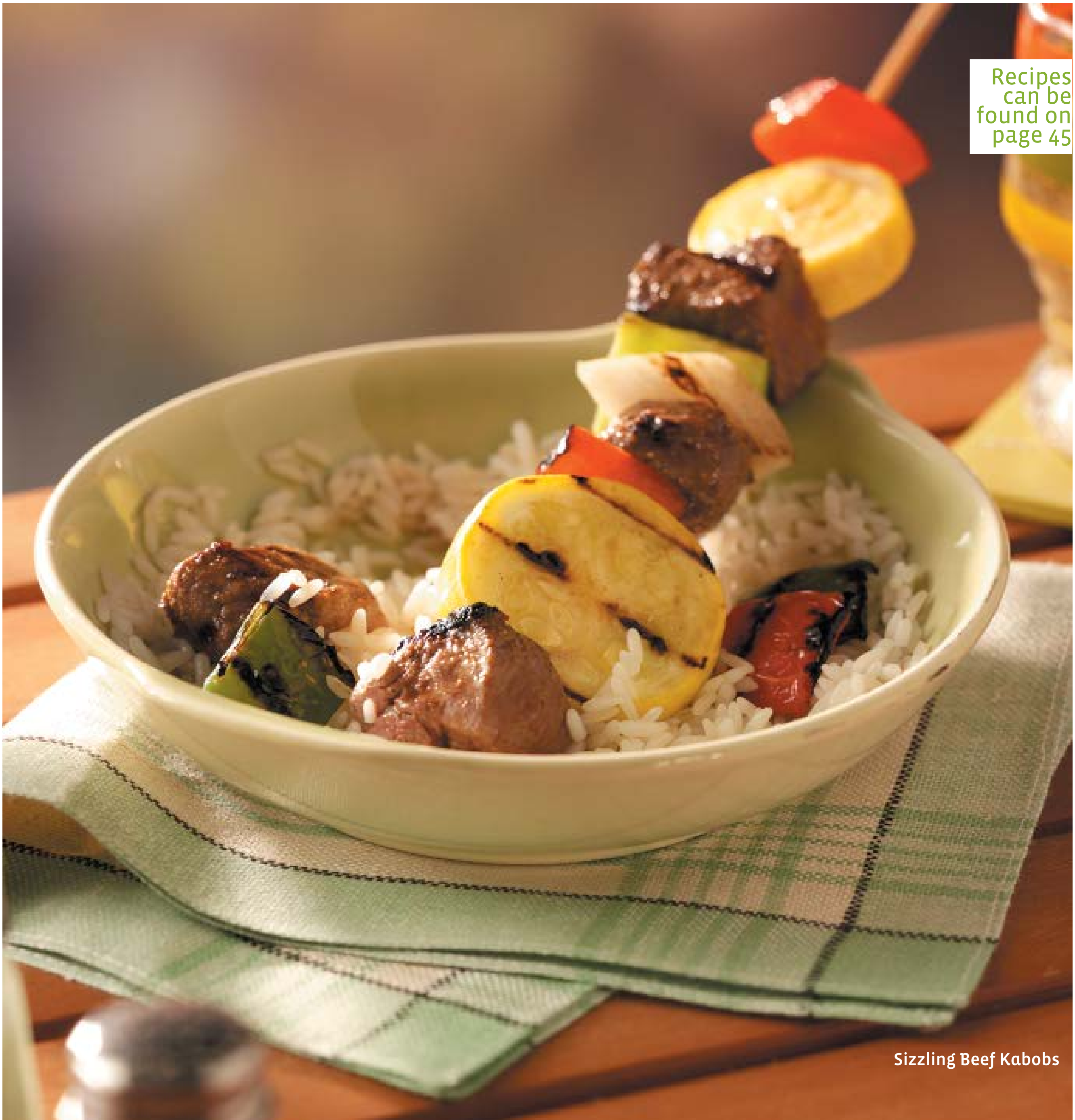
On birthdays, she'd make us our favorite meals and cakes; I always wanted a doll cake. Mom saved the plastic doll, so I was able to make that cake for my daughter, too.

Mom has so many wonderful recipes that it was difficult to pick just four as her "best." I have several recipe books full of favorites.

What really makes her recipes special is the memories tied to them. And with each new dish she tries, we create even more.

Recall Your Mom's Best?

If we feature your mom's meal, you'll earn $75. Send at least four recipes with background information. See Contributor Guidelines on page 62 or on our Web site to find out more.



Recipes can be found on page 45

Sizzling Beef Kabobs



PAVLOVA

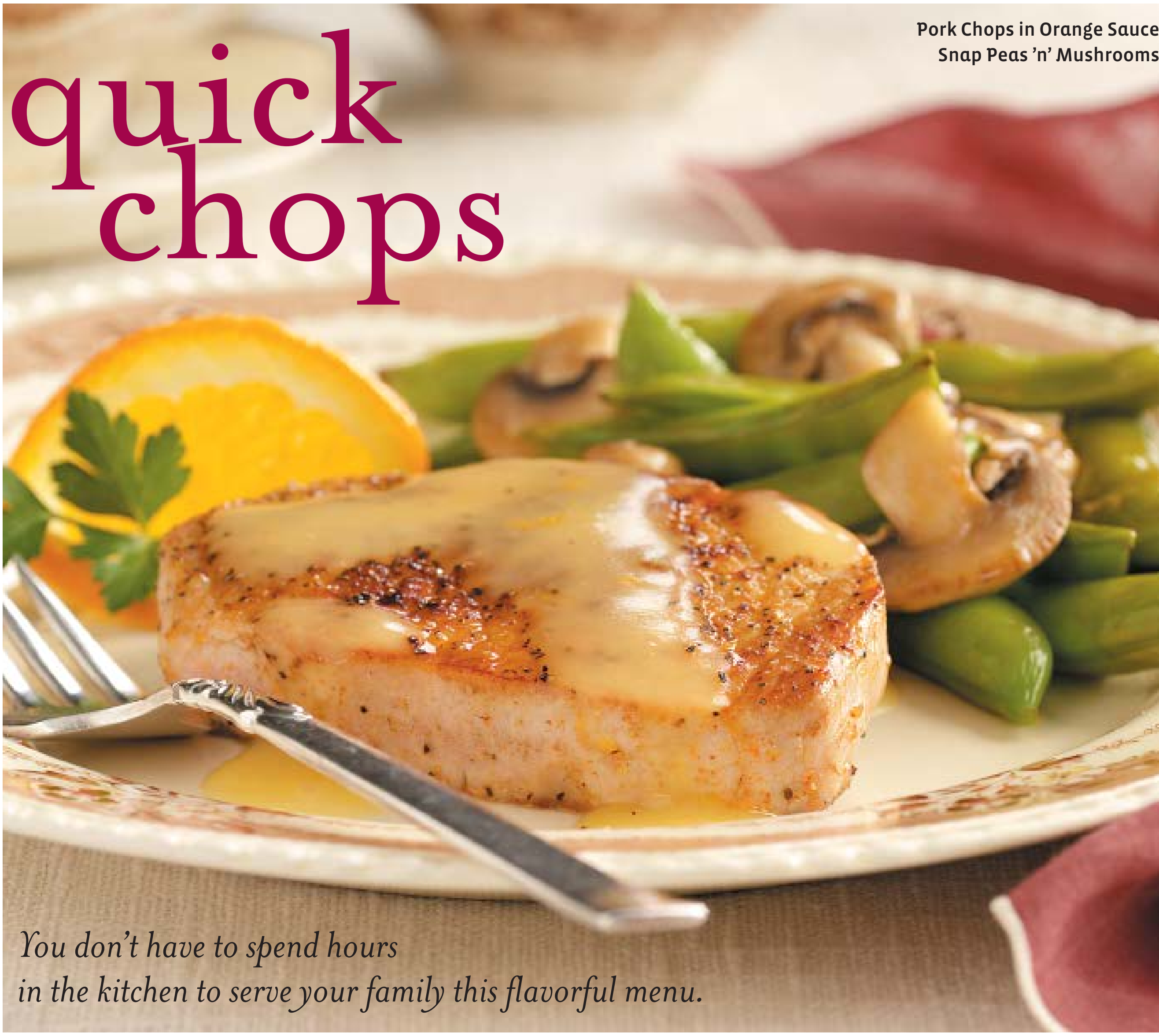


APPLESAUCE-RASPBERRY GELATIN MOLD



LATTICE CORN PIE

quick chops



Pork Chops in Orange Sauce
Snap Peas 'n' Mushrooms

You don't have to spend hours in the kitchen to serve your family this flavorful menu.

Food for Thought: Maybe kids would eat better if you installed a drive-up window off the kitchen and handed them dinner in a bag.

Pork Chops in Orange Sauce

PREP: 20 min. | COOK: 20 min.

★ Billie Moss
Walnut Creek, California

This flavorful recipe proves that meals don't have to be complicated to be special. The easy orange sauce with cloves dresses up everyday chops in no time, but your family will think you fussed.

1/4 teaspoon paprika
1/4 teaspoon pepper
4 boneless pork loin chops (6 ounces *each*)
3/4 cup orange juice
2 tablespoons sugar
6 whole cloves
1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/4 cup cold water

Combine paprika and pepper; rub over both sides of pork chops. In a large nonstick skillet, brown chops over medium heat.

Combine the orange juice, sugar, cloves and orange peel; pour over pork. Cover and simmer for 18-22 minutes or until meat juices run clear.

Remove chops and keep warm. In a small bowl, combine flour and water until smooth; stir into cooking juices. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Discard cloves. Serve sauce over pork chops. **Yield:** 4 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 pork chop with 3 tablespoons sauce equals 288 calories, 10 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 82 mg cholesterol, 47 mg sodium, 14 g carbohydrate, trace fiber, 33 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 5 lean meat, 1 starch.

Snap Peas 'n' Mushrooms

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 10 min.

★ Marie Hattrup
The Dalles, Oregon

It takes mere minutes to stir up this four-ingredient side dish, a nice change of pace from your usual green vegetable.

- 1/2 pound fresh sugar snap peas
- 8 medium fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 tablespoon teriyaki sauce

In a skillet or wok, stir-fry the peas and mushrooms in oil and teriyaki sauce until crisp-tender. Serve immediately. **Yield:** 4 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1/2 cup equals 68 calories, 4 g fat (trace saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 156 mg sodium, 6 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 3 g protein.

Mint Berry Blast

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 10 min.

Diane Harrison
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

What's better than a bowl of fresh-picked berries? A bowl of berries enhanced with mint, lemon and creamy whipped topping. It's quick, easy and oh, so refreshing!

- 1 cup *each* fresh raspberries, blackberries, blueberries and halved strawberries
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Whipped topping, optional

In a large bowl, combine the berries, mint and lemon juice; gently toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate until serving. Garnish with whipped topping if desired. **Yield:** 4 servings.

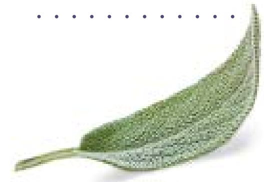
NUTRITION FACTS: 1 cup (calculated without whipped topping) equals 65 calories, 1 g fat (trace saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 1 mg sodium, 16 g carbohydrate, 6 g fiber, 1 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGE:** 1 fruit.



Mint Berry Blast

FAST FOOD. Need more recipes ready in 30 minutes? Find them at ***www.tasteofhome.com/plus.***

SECRET INGREDIENT



Readers put their personal touch on everyday family favorites.

Lively Meat Loaf

For a delicious but different flavor, try adding rubbed sage and a splash of Worcestershire sauce to your ground beef mixture when making meat loaf.

—**Jackie Larson**
North Branch, Minnesota



Tasty Toss

I like to add walnuts, grapes and canned mandarin oranges to my tossed salads. Kids who usually don't like greens really enjoy this combination.

—**Weda Mosellie**
Phillipsburg, New Jersey

Spiced-Up Chili

To ground beef chili with beans, I add spicy brown mustard. Nothing else is needed to make mild chili taste special.

—**Mary Cron**
Troy, Ohio

Pleasing Potato Salad

When I make potato salad, I throw in some finely chopped apple. Also, whipped cream or sour cream will give the salad an extra-special flavor.

—**Esther Wachter**
Yakima, Washington

Herbed Gravy

To give beef gravy extra flavor, I add some basil, which is my favorite herb. It's delicious!

—**Linda Grienke**
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Flavored Green Beans

You can serve your family something new and different simply by sprinkling a little nutmeg on your green beans before serving.

—**Richard Stelter**
St. Paul, Minnesota

Souped Up

We love tomato soup, especially when it's chilly outside. To add some pizzazz, we sprinkle Salad Supreme and whatever cheese we have on hand on top. Be sure to let the cheese melt.

—**Lori Shuster**
Greensburg, Pennsylvania

Creamy Scramble

Tired of ham-and-cheese omelets, I wanted to try something new for breakfast. So I stirred a couple tablespoons of garden vegetable-flavored cream cheese that I had on hand into beaten eggs. My husband said they were the best scrambled eggs he'd ever had.

—**Barbara Krofta**
Sparta, Missouri



Cookie Magic

The secret something that puts zing in my homemade chocolate chip cookies is 1/4 teaspoon of cinnamon.

—**Dave Carlson**
Orlando, Florida

Crunchy Tuna Sandwich

My sister-in-law dresses up tuna salad with grated carrot, then spreads the mixture on bread and pours on a little ranch dressing. Then she tops it all with tomato and pickle. It's a gourmet treat!

—**Mardee Allen**
Magna, Utah



sweet spring

Fresh and fabulous desserts celebrate the season.

Chocolate-Glazed Almond Bars

Strawberry Cream Cake

PREP: 45 min. | BAKE: 35 min. + cooling

Agnes DeLeon
Melrose, Montana

"I can't tell you how many times that I've made everyone ooh and aah when they see me bring out this beautiful cake. It is wonderful for any occasion."

- **6 eggs, *separated***
- **1-1/2 cups sugar, *divided***
- **3 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **3 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- **2 tablespoons water**
- **1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **2 cups heavy whipping cream**
- **1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **3 cups sliced fresh strawberries**
- **2 cups whole fresh strawberries**

Place egg whites in a large mixing bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. In another mixing bowl, beat egg yolks until slightly thickened. Gradually add 3/4 cup sugar, beating until thick and lemon-colored. Beat in the lemon juice, oil and water. Combine flour and salt; add to yolk mixture.

Beat egg whites on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually add remaining sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating on high until stiff glossy peaks form. Fold a fourth of the egg whites into the batter, then fold in remaining whites.

Gently spoon into an ungreased 10-in. tube pan; smooth the top. Bake at 325° for 35-40 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched. Immediately invert pan; cool completely.

In a large mixing bowl, beat cream until it begins to thicken. Add confectioners' sugar and vanilla; beat until stiff peaks form.

Run a knife around sides and center tube of pan; remove cake. Split into three horizontal layers. Place one layer on a serving plate; top with some of the whipped cream and sliced strawberries. Repeat. Top with remaining cake layer; spread remaining whipped cream over top and sides of cake. Arrange remaining sliced berries on sides of cake.

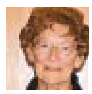
Cut whole berries in half; arrange on cake top. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 12 servings.

*Sweet Finales. Please share your favorite dessert treats with us. Go to **www.tasteofhome.com** or see page 62.*



Cool Rhubarb Dessert

PREP: 40 min. + chilling



Maxine Smith
Owanka, South Dakota

"When I want something very special, I turn to this recipe given to me by a neighbor. Even those who often pass up rhubarb desserts rave over these creamy squares. Perfection!"

- **1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **3/4 cup butter, melted**
- **1/4 cup finely chopped walnuts**

FILLING:

- **1 cup sugar**
- **3 tablespoons cornstarch**
- **2 tablespoons water**
- **4 cups chopped fresh *or* frozen rhubarb**

TOPPING:

- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar**
- **1 cup miniature marshmallows**
- **1-1/2 cups cold milk**
- **1 package (3.4 ounces) instant vanilla pudding mix**
- **1/4 cup flaked coconut, toasted**

In a small bowl, combine the flour, butter and walnuts. Press into an ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on a wire rack.

In a large saucepan, combine the sugar, cornstarch, water and rhubarb until blended. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes or until rhubarb is tender. Cool; pour over crust. Chill.

In a large mixing bowl, beat cream until thickened. Add confectioners' sugar and beat until soft peaks form. Fold in marshmallows. Spread over rhubarb layer.

In a small bowl, whisk milk and pudding mix for 2 minutes. Let stand for 2 minutes or until soft-set. Spread over cream layer; sprinkle with coconut. Cover and refrigerate for 4-5 hours or until set. Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes before cutting. **Yield**: 16 servings.

Chocolate-Glazed Almond Bars

PREP: 25 min. | BAKE: 20 min. + cooling

Robin Hart
North Brunswick, New Jersey

With a moist almond filling and a flaky golden crust, these bars are sure to be the perfect dessert for a garden get-together.

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **3/4 cup cold butter**
- **3 egg whites**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 can (12-1/2 ounces) almond filling**
- **2 cups sliced almonds**
- **4 squares (1 ounce *each*) bittersweet chocolate, melted**

In a large bowl, combine the flour, brown sugar and salt. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Pat into a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350° for 18-22 minutes or until edges are lightly browned.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, whisk the egg whites, sugar and almond filling until blended. Stir in almonds. Pour over crust. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until set. Cool completely on a wire rack.

Drizzle with chocolate. Cut into bars. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator. **Yield**: 40 bars.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 bar equals 156 calories, 8 g fat (3 g saturated fat), 9 mg cholesterol, 70 mg sodium, 21 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 2 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 1-1/2 fat, 1 starch.


Strawberry Cream Cake

Food for Thought: When the going gets tough, the tough eat chocolate.



downsized main dishes

...for a delightful brunch, lunch or supper.

Pepperoni Lasagna Roll-Ups

PREP: 25 min. BAKE: 25 min.

Jennifer Juday
Copperas Cove, Texas

"My husband is in the military, and when he's away from home, it's hard to come up with meals for myself. After finding I had some leftover items from making lasagna, I came up with this recipe."

- **3 lasagna noodles**
- **3/4 cup ricotta cheese**
- **1/2 teaspoon minced chives**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried oregano**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried basil**
- **24 slices pepperoni**
- **3 slices Swiss cheese, cut into thirds**
- **1 cup meatless spaghetti sauce**
- **1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese**

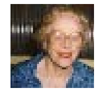
Cook noodles according to package directions; drain. Combine ricotta cheese, chives, oregano and basil; spread 1/4 cup over each noodle to within 1/2 in. of edges. Top with pepperoni and Swiss cheese; carefully roll up.

Place seam side down in a greased shallow 1-qt. baking dish; top with spaghetti sauce. Cover and bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until bubbly.

Uncover; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving. **Yield:** 3 servings.

Feta Asparagus Frittata

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 min.



★ Mildred Sherrer
Fort Worth, Texas

Asparagus and feta cheese come together to make this frittata extra special. It's perfect for a lazy Sunday or to serve with a tossed salad for a light lunch.

- **12 fresh asparagus spears, trimmed**
- **2 green onions, chopped**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **1 tablespoon olive oil**
- **6 eggs**
- **2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream**
- **Dash salt and pepper**
- **1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese**

In a large skillet, cook asparagus in a small amount of water for 6-8 minutes or until crisp-tender; drain. Finely chop two spears; set remaining asparagus aside.

In an 8-in. ovenproof pan or skillet, saute the onions, garlic and chopped asparagus in oil until tender. In a bowl, whisk the eggs, cream, salt and pepper; pour into skillet. Cover and cook over medium heat for 3-5 minutes or until eggs are nearly set.

Arrange reserved asparagus spears so they resemble spokes of a wheel over eggs; sprinkle with feta cheese. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 7-9 minutes or until eggs are completely set. **Yield:** 2 servings.



*Do you cook for one or two? Share recipes for your best downsized dishes at **www.tasteofhome.com**.*


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tasteful tidbits

Perk up your next party with one or more of these appealing recipes. Guests will be impressed!



Shrimp Wrapped in Bacon



Pull-Apart Bacon Bread

Shrimp Wrapped in Bacon

PREP: 25 min. BAKE: 20 min.



Eileen Stefanski
Wales, Wisconsin

If you're looking for something a little different to serve guests, you can't go wrong with these elegant shrimp bites, pleasantly seasoned with bacon, basil, goat cheese and barbecue sauce.

- **10 bacon strips**
- **20 large fresh basil leaves**
- **20 uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined**
- **1/4 cup barbecue sauce**
- **1/2 cup finely crumbled goat cheese**

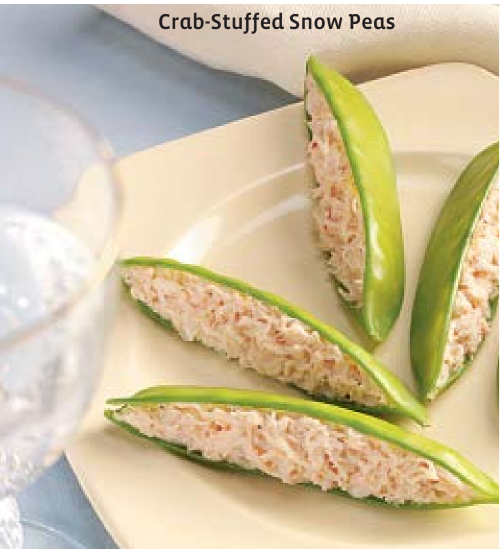
Cut each bacon strip in half widthwise; set aside. Wrap a basil leaf around each shrimp. Wrap a piece of bacon around each; secure with wooden toothpicks.

Place in a foil-lined 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake at 375° for 14-16 minutes or until bacon is crisp.

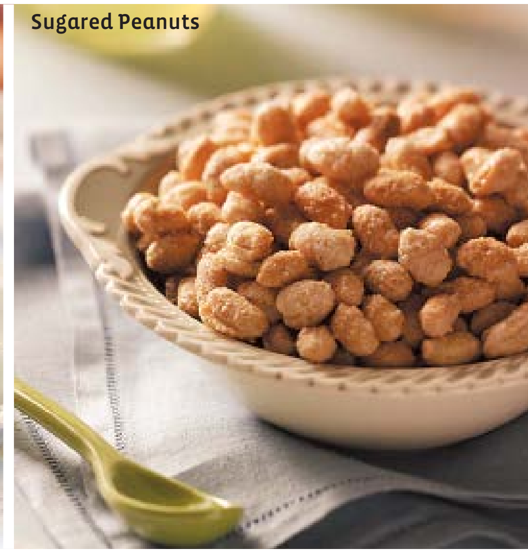
Brush with barbecue sauce; sprinkle with cheese. Bake 2-4 minutes longer or until heated through. **Yield**: 20 appetizers.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 appetizer equals 40 calories, 2 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 26 mg cholesterol, 133 mg sodium, trace carbohydrate, trace fiber, 4 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGE:** 1 lean meat.

*Snacks to Share? Submit your best snack recipes to us at **www.tasteofhome.com**, or* *see p. 62 for guidelines.*







Pull-Apart Bacon Bread

PREP: 15 min. BAKE: 25 min.

Terri Christensen
Montague, Michigan

"I made this tender and tasty bread for my husband, and he just loved it! When I'm out of bacon, I substitute bacon bits."

- **12 bacon strips, diced**
- **2 tubes (12 ounces *each*) refrigerated buttermilk biscuits**
- **2 cups (8 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
- **1 tablespoon Italian salad dressing mix**
- **2 teaspoons olive oil**

In a large skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until cooked but not crisp. Using a slotted spoon, remove to paper towels to drain. Separate biscuits; cut each biscuit into quarters.

In a large bowl, combine the cheese, dressing mix, oil and bacon. Place half of the biscuit pieces in a greased 10-in. fluted tube pan; sprinkle with half of the cheese mixture. Top with remaining biscuit pieces and cheese mixture.

Bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 5 minutes before inverting onto a serving plate. Serve immediately. **Yield**: 12 servings.

Crab-Stuffed Snow Peas

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 10 min.

Agnes Ward
Stratford, Ontario

"These crunchy appetizers have a wonderful crabmeat flavor and make an attractive addition to your nibble tray. Plus, they're simple to prepare."

- **1 can (6 ounces) crabmeat, drained, flaked and cartilage removed**
- **2 tablespoons mayonnaise**
- **1 tablespoon chili sauce *or* seafood cocktail sauce**
- **1/8 teaspoon salt**
- **3 drops hot pepper sauce**
- **Dash pepper**
- **16 fresh snow peas**

In a small bowl, combine the crab, mayonnaise, chili sauce, salt, pepper sauce and pepper.

Place snow peas in a steamer basket; place in a small saucepan over 1 in. of water. Bring to a boil; cover and steam for 30 seconds or until softened. Drain and immediately place snow peas in ice water. Drain and pat dry.

With a sharp knife, split pea pods along the curved edges. Spoon 1 tablespoon of crab mixture into each. Refrigerate until serving. **Yield**: 16 appetizers.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 appetizer equals 25 calories, 2 g fat (trace saturated fat), 10 mg cholesterol, 78 mg sodium, trace carbohydrate, trace fiber, 2 g protein.

Blue Cheese Date Wraps

PREP: 25 min. BAKE: 10 min.

Susan Hinton
Apex, North Carolina

"My friends and I used to make traditional bacon-wrapped jalapenos at cookouts. I decided to sweeten them up a bit with dates, which are also more kid-friendly."

- **12 bacon strips**
- **36 pitted dates**
- **2/3 cup crumbled blue cheese**

Cut each bacon strip into thirds. In a large skillet, cook bacon in batches over medium heat until partially cooked but not crisp. Remove to paper towels to drain; keep warm.

Carefully cut a slit in the center of each date; fill with blue cheese. Wrap a bacon piece around each stuffed date; secure with wooden toothpicks.

Place on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 10-12 minutes or until bacon is crisp. **Yield**: 3 dozen.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 appetizer equals 44 calories, 2 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 4 mg cholesterol, 84 mg sodium, 6 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 2 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 1/2 starch, 1/2 fat.

Sugared Peanuts

PREP: 20 min. BAKE: 30 min. + cooling

Polly Hall
Rockford, Michigan

"I tend to make these only for special occasions, because I can't keep my husband and son (and myself!) away from them. They go fast, so you may want to make a double batch."

- **5 cups unsalted peanuts**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 cup water**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**

In a large heavy saucepan, combine the peanuts, sugar and water. Bring to a boil; cook until syrup has evaporated, about 10 minutes.

Spread peanuts in a single layer in a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan; sprinkle with salt.

Bake at 300° for 30-35 minutes or until dry and lightly browned. Cool completely. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** 5 cups.

Food for Thought: If people were not meant to have a midnight snack, why do they put a light in the refrigerator?

fit for a queen

Couple hosts a "proper tea" in honor of Her Majesty's birthday.



Smoked Salmon Tea Sandwiches
Traditional Scones



By Chuck Hinz
Parma, Ohio

Hail to the Queen—and Happy Birthday! My wife, Michelle, and I like to have monthly dinners, many of them with themes. Last April, my brother, who loves all things British, suggested we celebrate the Queen's birthday. (Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, will turn 82 on April 21, by the way.)

It was a lot of fun planning a proper English tea—something we'd never done before. The table looked pretty and formal with rectangular glass luncheon plates we bought at an antiques store. Michelle made place cards with doily trim and gave everyone a British title. We used all our best serving pieces, including heirloom silver platters and cut glass.

Late April usually showcases spring flowers, but last year we had a heavy snowstorm that included a long power outage. We decided to go ahead with plans for

our special Queen's Birthday party anyway. One highlight of our menu was supposed to be fresh-baked scones with butter and preserves. But the oven didn't work! So we improvised and used a griddle on the stovetop. The results were warm and tasty—but I'd suggest using your oven.

The menu also included pots of different kinds of tea and a variety of finger sandwiches (see three of our sandwich recipes below). The sandwiches proved to be quite a hit, and the choices pleased everyone. For dessert, we served a special Queen's Birthday cake from our favorite bakery.

Despite the late snowstorm, our party was a success. We plan to continue our fancy tea tradition as a yearly salute to the Queen!



For their Queen's Birthday tea table, the Hinzes used fresh flowers, antique glass and formal place cards for an elegant look.

Walnut-Cream Cheese Finger Sandwiches

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 min.

- **12 ounces cream cheese, softened**
- **1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts, toasted**
- **2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
- **1 tablespoon finely chopped onion**
- **1 tablespoon finely chopped green pepper**
- **1 teaspoon lemon juice**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **Dash salt and pepper**
- **24 thin slices white sandwich bread, crusts removed**

In a small mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, walnuts, parsley, onion, green pepper, lemon juice, nutmeg, salt and pepper until blended.

Spread about 2 tablespoonfuls over each of 12 bread slices; top with remaining bread. Cut each sandwich into three 1-in.-wide strips. **Yield**: 3 dozen.

NUTRITION FACTS: 2 sandwiches equals 176 calories, 10 g fat (5 g saturated fat), 21 mg cholesterol, 291 mg sodium, 18 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 5 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 1 fat, 1/2 starch.

Tea Party Cucumber Sandwiches

PREP: 20 min. + standing

- **1 English cucumber, thinly sliced**
- **1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- **1 tablespoon olive oil**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/8 teaspoon sugar**
- **Dash pepper**
- **10 thin slices whole wheat sandwich bread, crusts removed**
- **5 teaspoons butter, softened**
- **Watercress sprigs**

In a small bowl, combine the cucumber, lemon juice, oil, salt, sugar and pepper. Let stand at room temperature for at least 2 hours.

Spread one side of each slice of bread with butter; cut each into four squares. Drain cucumber and pat dry; place two cucumber slices on each square. Garnish with watercress. **Yield:** 40 sandwiches.

NUTRITION FACTS: 2 sandwiches equals 51 calories, 2 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 3 mg cholesterol, 132 mg sodium, 6 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 2 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 1/2 starch, 1/2 fat.

Smoked Salmon Tea Sandwiches

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 20 min.

- **1 cup mayonnaise**
- **1 teaspoon dill weed**
- **1 teaspoon minced fresh parsley**
- **1 teaspoon lemon juice**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried thyme**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon**
- **1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- **Dash ground nutmeg**
- **9 thin slices white sandwich bread, crusts removed**
- **1 package (4 ounces) smoked salmon**
- **Dill sprigs**

In a small bowl, combine the first eight ingredients. Spread over each slice of bread; cut each into four triangles. Top with salmon. Garnish with dill sprigs. **Yield:** 3 dozen.

Traditional Scones

PREP: 20 min. BAKE: 25 min.

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 tablespoons sugar**
- **3 teaspoons baking powder**
- **1/8 teaspoon baking soda**
- **6 tablespoons cold butter**
- **1 egg**
- **1/2 cup buttermilk**
- **Jam of your choice, optional**

In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and baking soda. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In a small bowl, whisk egg and buttermilk until blended; add to crumb mixture just until moistened.

Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface; gently knead 8-10 times. Divide dough in half; pat each portion into a 5-in. circle. Cut each circle into six wedges.

Separate wedges and place 1 in. apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm with jam if desired. **Yield**: 1 dozen.

Food for Thought: Ecstasy is a glass of tea and a piece of sugar in the mouth. —Alexander Pushkin

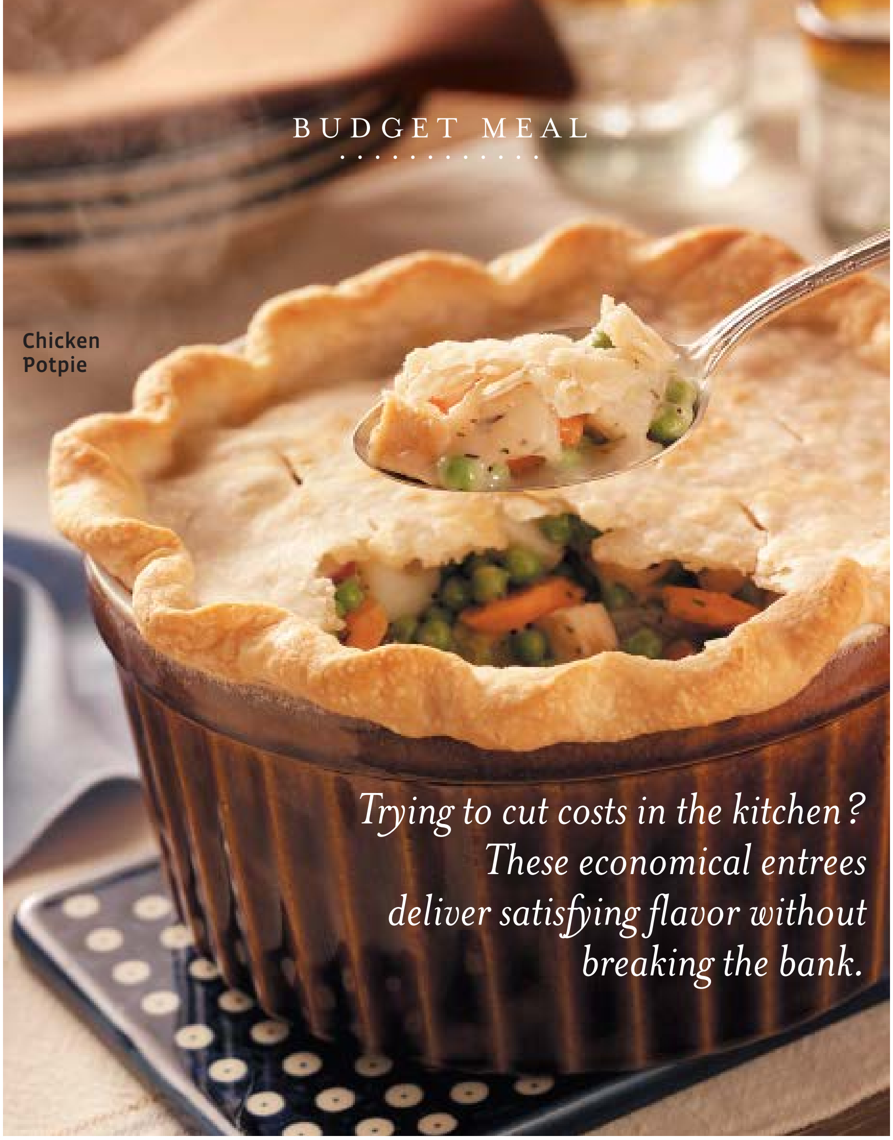
PARTIES PLUS. For other party themes with recipes, go to *www.tasteofhome.com/plus.*



Walnut-Cream Cheese Finger Sandwiches



Tea Party Cucumber Sandwiches



Chicken Potpie


Hearty Sausage Sandwich

money-saving main dishes

Chicken Potpie

PREP: 30 min. BAKE: 25 min.

★ Lucille Terry
Frankfort, Kentucky

Few dishes are as comforting as the popular potpie. This satisfying version is loaded with veggies and chunks of chicken, and you can make it for just $1.57 a serving.

- **3 medium carrots, sliced**
- **2 medium red potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch pieces**
- **1 medium turnip, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces**
- **1/4 cup butter, cubed**
- **1/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- **2 cups chicken broth**
- **1 teaspoon dried thyme**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 cups cubed cooked chicken**
- **1 cup frozen peas, thawed**
- **1 jar (4-1/2 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained**
- **4 green onions, sliced**

Pastry for single-crust pie (9 inches)

Place carrots, potatoes and turnip in a large saucepan; cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 10-15 minutes or until tender.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Stir in the flour until smooth. Gradually add broth, thyme, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until slightly thickened.

Drain vegetables and place in a large bowl; stir in the white sauce, chicken, peas, mushrooms and onions. Transfer to a greased 2-qt. round baking dish.

Place pastry over filling; trim, seal and flute edges. Cut slits in top. Bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes or until the crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Hearty Sausage Sandwich

PREP: 30 min. BAKE: 15 min.

Jillene Brown
Buckeye, Arizona

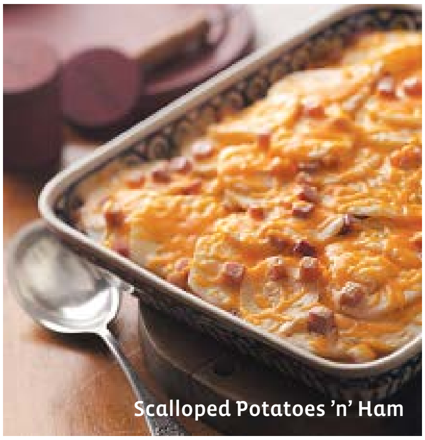
With its creamy Stroganoff-style filling, this scrumptious sandwich seems like something special. But at 98¢ a serving, it's an easy and thrifty choice for a casual weeknight meal or a game-day get-together.

- **1 pound bulk Italian sausage**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **1/2 cup chopped green pepper**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, cubed**
- **1/4 cup chopped fresh mushrooms**
- **1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- **1/4 cup water**
- **1/4 teaspoon dried oregano**
- **1 loaf (1 pound) unsliced Italian bread**
- **1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**

In a large skillet, cook the sausage, onion, green pepper and garlic over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Add the cream cheese, mushrooms, Parmesan cheese, water and oregano. Cook and stir until cheese is melted.

Cut bread in half horizontally; hollow out top and bottom, leaving a 3/4-in. shell (save removed bread for another use).

Place bread bottom on a baking sheet. Sprinkle with half of the mozzarella cheese; top with sausage mixture and re-



Scalloped Potatoes 'n' Ham

maining cheese. Replace bread top. Bake at 375° for 15 minutes or until cheese is melted. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Scalloped Potatoes 'n' Ham

PREP: 25 min. BAKE: 1 hour

Kathy Johnson
Lake City, South Dakota

"I'm a home health nurse and got this recipe from one of my elderly clients, who had used it for years. Now, it's one of my family's favorites. It will never curdle, thanks to the secret ingredient of powdered nondairy creamer." You can serve this homey favorite for just 85¢ per serving.

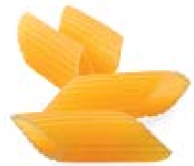
- **3/4 cup powdered nondairy creamer**
- **1-3/4 cups water**
- **3 tablespoons butter**
- **3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **2 tablespoons dried minced onion**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **3/4 teaspoon paprika**
- **6 large potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced**
- **2 cups diced fully cooked ham**
- **1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**

In a small bowl, combine creamer and water until smooth. In a small saucepan, melt butter. Stir in the flour, onion, salt and paprika until smooth; gradually add creamer mixture. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 1-2 minutes or until thickened.

In a greased shallow 2-1/2-qt. baking dish, combine the potatoes and ham. Pour sauce over the top.

Cover and bake at 350° for 15 minutes. Uncover; bake 40-50 minutes longer or until potatoes are tender. Sprinkle with cheese; bake for 5-10 minutes or until edges are bubbly and cheese is melted. **Yield:** 6 servings.

DOES ANYONE HAVE?



Readers looking for recipes turn here for help.

My mother used to make a dessert she called Old Tom Pudding and Dippy Dippy Dare. It was a one-layer white cake cut into squares that was topped with a lavender-colored sauce. Has anyone heard of it?

—Tom Markham
1611 Glendale Dr.
Bowling Green KY 42104

I always made oatmeal bars with a layer of pureed raisins, but I've misplaced the recipe and hope someone can help me.

—Geri Lucas
4891 Augusta Ave.
Oldsmar FL 34677



I'm searching for a dessert recipe my mother used to make. It had layers of vanilla wafers, crushed pineapple, red gelatin poured over the top and possibly a creamy filling. Does this sound familiar to anyone?

—Elizabeth King
2528 Jefferson St.
Duluth MN 55812

Could someone share their recipe for Penne Cardinals? It's shrimp in a lobster sauce with penne pasta.

—Jeanne Bernhard
2010 Farmington Ct.
Clermont FL 34711

In the 1970s, a restaurant in North Kansas City, Missouri served a dish called Spaghetti Red—a chili-like concoction served over spaghetti. I'd love to have the recipe.

—Carol Wheeler
513 S. Eighth St.
Rich Hill MO 64779

I would like an easy steak soup recipe and a hamburger soup recipe. Could someone send these to me?

—Barbara Goldsmith
2103 Vermont Loop
Kennewick WA 99336-1059

My grandmother used to make the most wonderful Old World German potato salad. The dressing wasn't too tart or too sweet. Does anyone have a recipe they'd send me?

—Sandra Thiele
P.O. Box 30387
Spokane WA 99223

In the late 1950s, we enjoyed Jack Sprat hamburgers at a Tastee-Freez drive-in. Does anyone happen to know how to make them?

—Judy Griffin
P.O. Box 323
Duvall WA 98019

In the 1930s, my mom served pressed chicken sandwiches with a spread-like filling. Does anyone know how to make these?

—Mary Lou Rainford
1213 Campbell St.
Valparaiso IN 46385

I'm looking for a recipe for Moon Rice. My father used to make it, in the 1980s, with white rice, shrimp and peas, but it's not a fried rice recipe. Might somebody have it?

—Andrea Warriner
325 College Hwy.
Southwick MA 01077

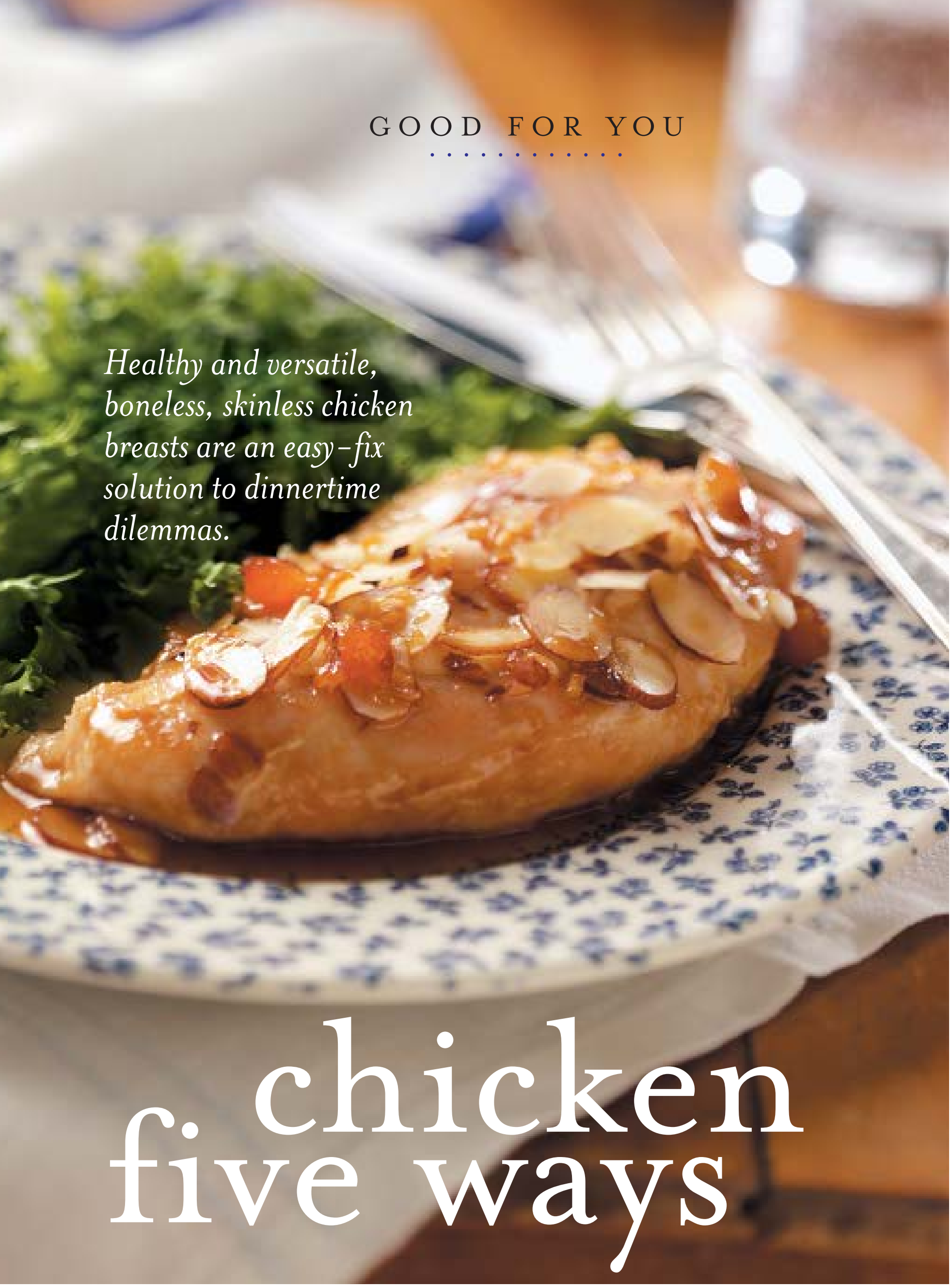
I bought a jar of sweet potato butter and loved it. Would you have a recipe so I could make it?

—Kathy Smith
306 Meadow Hills Ln.
McLeansboro IL 62859

If you can answer any of these questions, write directly to the person seeking information. If you have a question, submit it at *www.tasteofhome.com*. Please see Contributor Guidelines on page 62.

Need a quick reply? Because we receive so many requests for this column, it could be quite a while before you see your question in print. So, if you want an answer fast, visit *www.tasteofhome.com* and click on "Join a Discussion!" Select a bulletin board and pose your question. You're bound to get a response in no time!

Food for Thought: Eat all you can; can all you can't.

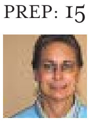


Healthy and versatile, boneless, skinless chicken breasts are an easy-fix solution to dinnertime dilemmas.

chicken five ways

Almond Chicken with Apricot Sauce *(Above)*

PREP: 15 min. | BAKE: 30 min.



Erma Yoder
Millersburg, Indiana

With its fruity, slightly sweet sauce, this tender chicken is full of flavor, not fat. "When my children were all at home, they would rate each new recipe I served on a scale of 1 to 10. This is one of the 10s."

- **1 cup apricot spreadable fruit**
- **3 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce**
- **2 tablespoons finely chopped onion**
- **4 teaspoons cider vinegar**
- **1 teaspoon ground mustard**
- **6 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (6 ounces *each*)**
- **1/2 cup sliced almonds**
- **1 tablespoon butter, melted**

In a shallow bowl, combine the first five ingredients; transfer 1/2 cup to a serving bowl and set aside. Dip chicken in remaining apricot mixture. Place in a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish coated with cooking spray.

Sprinkle almonds over chicken; drizzle with butter. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until juices run clear. Serve with reserved apricot sauce. **Yield:** 6 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 chicken breast half with 4 teaspoons sauce equals 361 calories, 10 g fat (3 g saturated fat), 99 mg cholesterol, 398 mg sodium, 29 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 37 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 5 very lean meat, 2 fruit, 1 fat.

Apple 'n' Onion Chicken

PREP: 20 min. | BAKE: 30 min.

Sheryl VanderWagen
Coopersville, Michigan

"When I first discovered this recipe, the unique combination of flavors caught my attention. Since then, I have made this main dish many times for company and family, and it always gets rave reviews."

- **3 medium apples, sliced**
- **2 large onions, thinly sliced**
- **1 tablespoon butter**
- **6 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (5 ounces *each*)**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- **3/4 cup shredded reduced-fat Swiss cheese**
- **1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- **1/4 cup seasoned bread crumbs**
- **1/2 teaspoon minced fresh thyme**
- **2 tablespoons unsweetened apple juice**

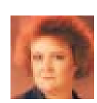
In a large skillet, saute apples and onions in butter for 10 minutes or until tender. Transfer to a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish coated with cooking spray. Top with chicken; sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Combine the cheeses, bread crumbs and thyme; sprinkle over chicken. Drizzle with apple juice. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until chicken juices run clear. **Yield:** 6 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 chicken breast half with 1 cup apple mixture equals 285 calories, 7 g fat (3 g saturated fat), 92 mg cholesterol, 348 mg sodium, 17 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 36 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 5 very lean meat, 1 vegetable, 1/2 fruit, 1/2 fat.

Chicken with Lemon-Caper Sauce

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 min.



★ Rebecca Baird
Salt Lake City, Utah

Lemon lovers will savor the citrus sauce that enhances this moist chicken. The hint of garlic adds to this attractive entree's appeal.

- **3 garlic cloves, minced**
- **4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (5 ounces *each*)**
- **Dash salt and pepper**
- **1 cup cold water, *divided***
- **1/4 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth**
- **1 tablespoon butter-flavored sprinkles**
- **1 tablespoon lemon juice**

- **1 reduced-sodium chicken bouillon cube**
- **1 tablespoon cornstarch**
- **3 tablespoons capers, drained**
- **1 teaspoon olive oil**

In a large skillet coated with cooking spray, cook and stir garlic over medium heat for 2-3 minutes or until browned. Add chicken; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook for 4-5 minutes on each side or until juices run clear. Remove and keep warm.

In a small bowl, combine 3/4 cup water, broth, butter-flavored sprinkles, lemon juice and bouillon; add to the skillet. Combine cornstarch and remaining water until smooth; gradually stir into skillet. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until sauce is thickened. Stir in capers and oil. Add chicken; turn to coat. Serve chicken with sauce. **Yield:** 4 servings.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This recipe was tested with Molly McButter. Look for it in the spice aisle.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 chicken breast half with 1/2 cup sauce equals 183 calories, 5 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 79 mg cholesterol, 598 mg sodium, 4 g carbohydrate, trace fiber, 29 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGE:** 4 very lean meat.

Tropical Lime Chicken

PREP: 20 min. + marinating
COOK: 10 min.

Jennifer Eilts
Lincoln, Nebraska

"Every time I make this, I alter the salsa a little. You can add papaya, green pepper or any other healthy ingredients you prefer."

SALSA:
- **1/2 cup pineapple tidbits**
- **1 medium kiwifruit, peeled and chopped**
- **1/4 cup chopped sweet red pepper**
- **1 tablespoon lime juice**
- **1 tablespoon white wine vinegar**
- **1 tablespoon honey**
- **1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes**

CHICKEN:
- **3 tablespoons plus 1-1/2 teaspoons lime juice**
- **1 tablespoon canola oil**
- **1 teaspoon grated lime peel**
- **1/8 teaspoon salt**
- **1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- **4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (4 ounces *each*)**
- **1 cup uncooked couscous**

In a small bowl, combine the salsa ingredients; cover and refrigerate until serving.

In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the lime juice, oil, lime peel, salt and pepper; add chicken. Seal bag and turn to coat; refrigerate for 2-4 hours.

Drain and discard marinade. Place chicken on a broiler pan coated with cooking spray. Broil 3 in. from the heat for 5-6 minutes on each side or until juices run clear. Meanwhile, cook couscous according to package directions. Serve with chicken and salsa. **Yield:** 4 servings (1 cup salsa).

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 chicken breast half with 1/2 cup couscous and 1/4 cup salsa equals 371 calories, 7 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 63 mg cholesterol, 135 mg sodium, 49 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 30 g protein.

Blackberry Chicken

PREP: 20 min. | BAKE: 20 min.

Laura Van Ness
Clearlake Oaks, California

"My family loves this chicken. We pick blackberries together, and I freeze some so we can enjoy this dish all year long."

- **2 tablespoons plus 1/2 cup fresh blackberries, *divided***
- **1/2 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth, *divided***
- **2 tablespoons brown sugar**
- **2 tablespoons white wine vinegar**
- **1 teaspoon olive oil**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **3/4 teaspoon paprika, *divided***
- **1/4 teaspoon ground cumin**
- **6 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (5 ounces *each*)**
- **4-1/2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 teaspoons cornstarch**

In a small bowl, mash 2 tablespoons berries. Add 1/4 cup broth, brown sugar, vinegar, oil, garlic, 1/4 teaspoon paprika and cumin.

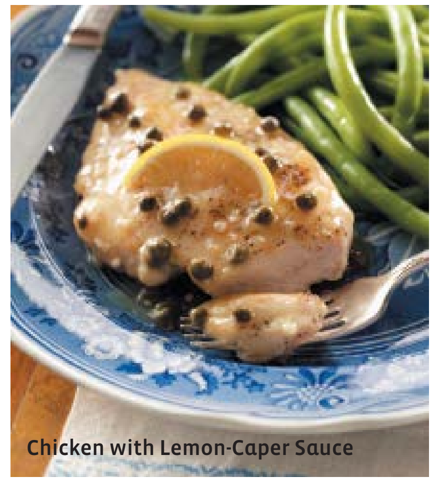
Place chicken in an 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking dish coated with cooking spray; pour broth mixture over the top. Sprinkle with thyme, salt, pepper and remaining paprika.

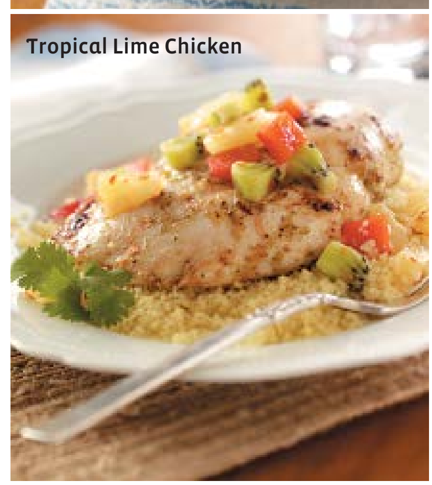
Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 20-25 minutes or until chicken juices run clear, basting occasionally with pan juices. Remove chicken and keep warm.

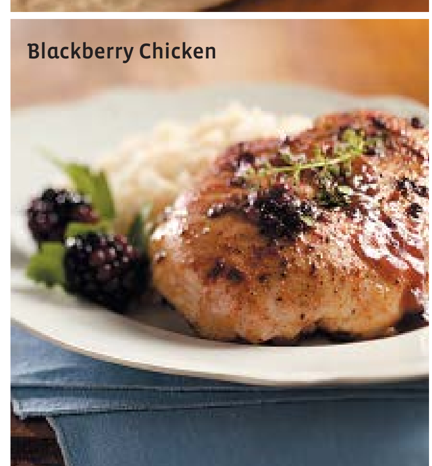
Skim fat from pan drippings. In a small saucepan, combine cornstarch and remaining broth until smooth. Gradually stir in drippings. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 1-2 minutes or until thickened. Serve with chicken; sprinkle with remaining blackberries. **Yield:** 6 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 chicken breast half with 2 tablespoons sauce (calculated without rice) equals 192 calories, 4 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 78 mg cholesterol, 315 mg sodium, 8 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 29 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 4 very lean meat, 1/2 starch.


Apple 'n' Onion Chicken


Chicken with Lemon-Caper Sauce


Tropical Lime Chicken


Blackberry Chicken



White Chocolate Berry Dessert

PREP: 35 min. BAKE: 40 min. + cooling

Sarah Gwyn
Orlando, Florida

"I made up this recipe and, after fine-tuning it a bit, I think I have a hit! One of my favorite things about Taste of Home is that truly delicious recipes are featured—not just easy-to-make or quick ones."

- 8 squares (1 ounce *each*) white baking chocolate
- 6 tablespoons butter, cubed
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

FILLING:

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 3 squares (1 ounce *each*) white baking chocolate, melted and cooled
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

TOPPING:

- 1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 4 squares (1 ounce *each*) white baking chocolate, melted and cooled
- 1 pint fresh strawberries, sliced

In a microwave-safe bowl, melt white chocolate and butter at 70% power; stir until smooth. Cool.

In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs and sugar until lemon-colored. Beat in melted chocolate mixture and vanilla. Combine flour and salt; beat into egg mixture. Spread into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish; set aside.

For filling, in a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and white chocolate. Beat in the egg, sugar, sour cream and vanilla just until combined. Carefully spread over bottom layer. Cut through filling with a knife to swirl.

Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.

Just before serving, fold whipped topping into white chocolate. Fold in strawberries; spread over dessert. Cut into squares. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 15 servings.






LOVE THAT Lemon

Taste of Home readers proved they are sweet on citrus, submitting more than 2,600 entries for our recent "Lemon Lovers" contest.

Trisha Kammers of Clarkston, Washington added zest to our judges' day with her luscious **Lemon Chiffon Cake**. Trisha was awarded the $500 Grand Prize.

Winning second place was Kay Seiler of Greenville, Ohio for her tangy **Lemonade Meringue Pie**. Kay will be able to enjoy dinner for four at the restaurant of her choice. Ten runners-up each received a copy of our *Contest Winning Annual Recipes 2007* cookbook.

You'll find all 12 winning lemon recipes in the Clip & Keep recipe card section beginning on page 37, along with 20 more recipes from readers and field editors. Next time, we'll feature the winners in our "Corn Is King" contest.














light & lemony

When life throws her lemons, Trisha Kammers makes lemon cake. But not just any lemon cake…her prize-winning Lemon Chiffon Cake.

Trisha, of Clarkston, Washington, took home the Grand Prize of $500 in *Taste of Home's* recent "Lemon Lovers" contest. Tall, tender and moist, this cake had our judges sneaking extra samples.

"I've been making this cake for about 25 years," Trisha notes. "My mother found the original recipe, which used oranges, in a small cookbook for teenagers that she received when she was a teen. I revamped the recipe to include lemon.

"I find the cake light and refreshing. The recipe takes a little time to make, so I reserve it for birthdays or holidays."

Though Trisha claims she's "not much of a baker," she says she makes a really good pie crust. "And my children always liked my chocolate chip cookies when they lived at home."

She has two children, Shawn and Erin, and a granddaughter, Jordan.

Asian Flair

Cooking is a favorite pastime for Trisha, who has worked in retail for more than 30 years. "I really love preparing Chinese food. People always request my homemade pot stickers," she notes.

"As a child, I enjoyed being in the kitchen with my mom, who's an excellent cook. I'd play restaurant with my girlfriend, and we'd make soup using water, saltine crackers and raw potatoes."

Her childhood soup wouldn't win any contests, but her Lemon Chiffon Cake is a blue-ribbon hit. Try it, and we think you'll agree!

WIN CASH! Turn to page 53 to learn how you can enter *Taste of Home's* next national recipe contest…and get your chance at our $500 Grand Prize.

Sweet Lemon Tips

Next time you fill ice cube trays, add 4 to 5 drops of lemon juice to each cube. The cubes add great flavor to a glass of iced tea or water.

—Bobby Taylor
La Porte, Indiana



Try stirring pureed fresh raspberries (strain the seeds) into fresh lemonade. It's a refreshing variation.

—Dorothy Morris
Shelley, Idaho

For my lemon meringue pie, I line an unbaked pie crust with heavy-duty aluminum foil and fill with dried beans before baking. This keeps the crust from shrinking as it bakes.

—Betty Fulks
Onia, Arkansas

I grate lemon peel and freeze it in plastic containers. When needed, I can easily measure it. I also squeeze the lemon juice into ice cube trays and freeze, so I always have it available.

—Annethea Ann Novacek
Greenbush, Minnesota

Lemon Chiffon Cake

PREP: 25 min.
BAKE: 50 min. + cooling

Trisha Kammers
Clarkston, Washington

This moist, airy cake was my dad's favorite. I revamped my mom's recipe, which called for oranges. I'm not much of a baker, so I don't make it very often. But it's well worth the effort.



Lemonade Meringue Pie

PREP: 30 min.
BAKE: 15 min. + chilling

Kay Seiler
Greenville, Ohio

Lemonade concentrate and lemon juice give this special pie an excellent citrus flavor. I also like to add some lemon zest on top of the meringue.



Pecan Lemon Loaf

PREP: 20 min.
BAKE: 50 min. + cooling

Laura Comitz
Enola, Pennsylvania

A pretty glaze gives this tender, nutty bread an extra boost of lemony flavor. I make it at least once a week. For variety, I substitute grated orange peel and orange juice for the lemon.



Chicken Fingers with Lemon Sauce

PREP: 20 min.
COOK: 5 min./batch

Amanda Donnelly
Fairborn, Ohio

My husband turned up his nose when he saw me making this the first time, but he absolutely flipped when he tasted it. I like to serve the chicken with an apple rice pilaf salad.



Pecan Lemon Loaf

- 1/2 **cup butter, softened**
- 1-1/2 **cups sugar, *divided***
- 2 **eggs**
- 2 **cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 **teaspoon baking powder**
- 1/2 **teaspoon salt**
- 3/4 **cup sour cream**
- 1 **cup chopped pecans, toasted**
- 1 **tablespoon grated lemon peel**
- 1/4 **cup lemon juice**

In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and 1 cup sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs; mix well. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with sour cream. Fold in pecans and lemon peel.

Transfer to a greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 50-60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean.

In a small saucepan, combine lemon juice and remaining sugar. Cook and stir over medium heat until sugar is dissolved. Pour over warm bread. Cool completely on a wire rack before removing from pan. **Yield:** 1 loaf (16 slices).

Chicken Fingers with Lemon Sauce

- 1 **jar (10 ounces) lemon curd**
- 1/4 **cup chicken broth**
- 1/2 **teaspoon soy sauce**
- 1/4 **teaspoon ground ginger**
- 1 **cup buttermilk**
- 1 **tablespoon grated lemon peel**
- 1 **cup all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 **cup cornstarch**
- 1-1/4 **pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into strips**
- **Vegetable oil for frying**

In a small saucepan, combine the lemon curd, broth, soy sauce and ginger. Cook and stir until combined and heated through; keep warm.

In a shallow bowl, combine buttermilk and lemon peel. In another bowl, combine flour and cornstarch. Dip chicken in buttermilk mixture, then coat with flour mixture.

In an electric skillet, heat oil to 375°. Fry chicken, a few strips at a time, for 2-3 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Serve with lemon sauce. **Yield:** 4 servings (1-1/4 cups sauce).

Lemon Chiffon Cake

- 7 **eggs, *separated***
- 2 **cups all-purpose flour**
- 1-1/2 **cups sugar**
- 3 **teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 **teaspoon salt**
- 3/4 **cup water**
- 1/2 **cup vegetable oil**
- 4 **teaspoons grated lemon peel**
- 2 **teaspoons vanilla extract**
- 1/2 **teaspoon cream of tartar**

LEMON FROSTING:

- 1/3 **cup butter, softened**
- 3 **cups confectioners' sugar**
- 4-1/2 **teaspoons grated lemon peel**
- **Dash salt**
- 1/4 **cup lemon juice**

Let eggs stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. In another bowl, whisk the egg yolks, water, oil, lemon peel and vanilla; add to dry ingredients. Beat until well blended.

In another large mixing bowl, beat egg whites and cream of tartar on medium speed until soft peaks form; fold into batter. Gently spoon into an ungreased 10-in. tube pan. Cut through batter with a knife to remove air pockets.

Bake on the lowest oven rack at 325° for 50-55 minutes or until top springs back when lightly touched. Immediately invert the pan; cool completely, about 1 hour.

Run a knife around side and center tube of pan. Remove cake to a serving plate. In a small mixing bowl, combine frosting ingredients; beat until smooth. Spread over top of cake. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Lemonade Meringue Pie

- 3 **eggs, *separated***
- 1 **package (4.6 ounces) cook-and-serve vanilla pudding mix**
- 1-1/4 **cups milk**
- 1 **cup (8 ounces) sour cream**
- 1/3 **cup lemonade concentrate**
- 1 **teaspoon lemon juice**
- 1/4 **teaspoon cream of tartar**
- 6 **tablespoons sugar**
- 1 **pastry shell (9 inches), baked**

Place egg whites in a small mixing bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, combine the pudding mix, milk and sour cream until smooth. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened and bubbly, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat; cook and stir 2 minutes longer.

Remove from the heat. Gradually whisk 1 cup hot filling into egg yolks; return all to the pan. Bring to a gentle boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat. Gently stir in lemonade concentrate; keep warm.

Add lemon juice and cream of tartar to egg whites; beat on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, on high until stiff glossy peaks form and sugar is dissolved.

Pour warm filling into pastry shell. Spread meringue over filling, sealing edges to pastry.

Bake at 350° for 15-20 minutes or until meringue is golden brown. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours before serving. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Tossed Salad with Lemon Vinaigrette

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 25 min.

Teresa Otto
Hartwell, Georgia

I often take this dressed-up Caesar salad to church functions or family reunions. Its interesting blend of flavors is a hit with everyone, so I always come home with an empty bowl.



Slice 'n' Bake Lemon Gems

PREP: 25 min. + chilling
BAKE: 10 min./batch + cooling

Delores Edgecomb
Atlanta, New York

Edged in sweet sprinkles, these melt-in-your-mouth cookies are pretty enough for a party. I make a lot of them for holiday cookie trays.



Sparkling Ginger Lemonade

PREP: 20 min. + cooling

Jodi Blubaugh
Eagle Mountain, Utah

Chill out with this delightful cooler, perfect for springtime bridal showers or hot summer days on the deck. It's a quick fix you'll stir up time after time.



Fluffy Lemon Squares

PREP: 25 min. + chilling

Joyce Speerbrecher
Grafton, Wisconsin

These rich bars, with a vanilla wafer crust, get their sweet-tart flavor from lemon gelatin, sherbet and pudding mix. They're fun to make with my grandchildren.



Sparkling Ginger Lemonade

- **2 cups water**
- **1 cup honey**
- **2 tablespoons minced fresh gingerroot**
- **2 cups club soda, chilled**
- **1 cup lemon juice**

In a small saucepan, bring the water, honey and ginger to a boil. Remove from the heat; cover and steep for 10 minutes. Strain, discarding ginger. Cool.

Transfer to a pitcher; stir in soda and lemon juice. Serve immediately over ice. **Yield:** 5 servings.

TASTE OF HOME April & May 2008

Fluffy Lemon Squares

- **1-1/2 cups crushed vanilla wafers (about 45 wafers)**
- **1/3 cup chopped pecans**
- **6 tablespoons butter, melted**
- **1/2 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **2 packages (3 ounces *each*) lemon gelatin**
- **1-1/4 cups boiling water**
- **1 package (3.4 ounces) instant lemon pudding mix**
- **1 pint lemon sherbet, softened**

In a small bowl, combine the wafer crumbs, pecans and butter; set aside 1/4 cup for topping. Press remaining crumb mixture into an ungreased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. dish. Cover; refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small mixing bowl, beat cream until stiff peaks form; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Add pudding mix; beat on low speed for 2 minutes. Add sherbet; beat on low for 1 minute or until soft-set. Gently fold in whipped cream.

Spread over crust; sprinkle with reserved crumb mixture. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until set. **Yield:** 12 servings.

TASTE OF HOME April & May 2008

Tossed Salad with Lemon Vinaigrette

- **1 bunch romaine, torn**
- **1 medium head iceberg lettuce, torn**
- **10 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**
- **2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved**
- **1 cup slivered almonds**
- **1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese**
- **1 cup salad croutons**

VINAIGRETTE:

- **3 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **2/3 cup olive oil**

In a large salad bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. In a small bowl, combine the lemon juice, Parmesan cheese, garlic, salt and pepper. Gradually whisk in oil. Drizzle over salad and toss to coat. Serve immediately. **Yield:** 21 servings.

TASTE OF HOME April & May 2008

Slice 'n' Bake Lemon Gems

- **3/4 cup butter, softened**
- **1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1 tablespoon grated lemon peel**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 cup cornstarch**
- **1/4 cup colored nonpareils**

LEMON ICING:

- **1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel**

In a small mixing bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in lemon peel. Combine flour and cornstarch; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.

Shape into a 1-3/4-in.-diameter roll; roll in nonpareils. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 2-3 hours or until firm.

Unwrap and cut into 1/4-in. slices. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 9-11 minutes or until set and edges are lightly browned. Cool for 1 minute before removing to wire racks to cool completely.

In a small bowl, combine icing ingredients. Spread over cookies. **Yield:** 28 cookies.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 cookie equals 102 calories, 5 g fat (3 g saturated fat), 13 mg cholesterol, 35 mg sodium, 13 g carbohydrate, trace fiber, 1 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 1 starch, 1 fat.

TASTE OF HOME April & May 2008

Lemon Crumb Muffins

PREP: 25 min.
BAKE: 20 min./batch

Claudette Brownlee
Kingfisher, Oklahoma

I like to have the dough for these cake-like muffins ready and waiting in the refrigerator when company comes. They bake up in just 20 minutes and taste delicious warm from the oven.



Lemon Cheesecake Dessert

PREP: 25 min.
BAKE: 30 min. + chilling

Patty Auxier
Royalton, Kentucky

Everyone will know spring is here when you serve these bright yellow squares. Cool and refreshing, this dessert cuts easily and keeps for several days in the fridge.

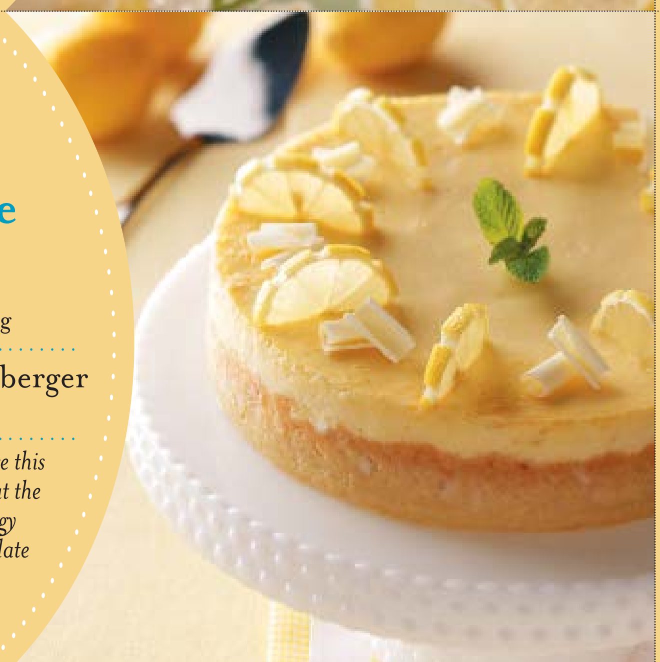


Lemony White Chocolate Cheesecake

PREP: 30 min.
BAKE: 65 min. + chilling

Marlene Schollenberger
Bloomington, Illinois

It takes some time to prepare this eye-catching cheesecake, but the luscious combination of tangy lemon and rich white chocolate is hard to beat!



Lemon Bar Trifle

PREP: 35 min. + chilling

Alyce McCrary
Leighton, Alabama

When I was a new bride, almost 50 years ago, my husband gave me a mixer for my birthday. This lemon filling was in the small recipe book that came with it. The tangy flavor always takes me back to those days of trying out different recipes on my husband.



"LEMON LOVERS" CONTEST

Lemony White Chocolate Cheesecake

- **1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar**
- **1 teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- **1/2 cup cold butter, cubed**

FILLING:

- **4 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened**
- **1-1/4 cups sugar**
- **2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream**
- **2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- **4 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **10 squares (1 ounce *each*) white baking chocolate, melted and cooled**
- **2 teaspoons grated lemon peel**

Place a 9-in. springform pan on a double thickness of heavy-duty foil (about 18 in. square). Securely wrap foil around pan; set aside.

In a small bowl, combine the flour, confectioners' sugar and lemon peel; cut in butter until crumbly. Press onto the bottom and 1 in. up the sides of prepared pan. Place on a baking sheet. Bake at 325° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, sugar, flour, lemon juice, cream and vanilla until well blended. Add eggs; beat on low speed just until combined. Stir in white chocolate and lemon peel. Pour into crust.

Place pan in a large baking pan; add 1 in. of hot water to larger pan. Bake at 325° for 65-85 minutes or until center is just set and top appears dull.

Remove pan from water bath. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight. Remove sides of pan before slicing. **Yield:** 12 servings.

Lemon Bar Trifle

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup chopped pecans**
- **1 cup butter, melted**

LEMON LAYER:

- **1-1/2 cups sugar**
- **1/4 cup cornstarch**
- **1/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1-3/4 cups cold water**
- **3 egg yolks, beaten**
- **2/3 cup lemon juice**
- **2 tablespoons butter**
- **4 teaspoons grated lemon peel**

CREAM CHEESE LAYER:

- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **3 cups confectioners' sugar**
- **1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed**

In a small bowl, combine flour and pecans; stir in butter. Press into an ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Bake at 350° for 18-20 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

In a small heavy saucepan, combine the sugar, cornstarch and flour. Stir in water until smooth. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until thickened and bubbly. Reduce heat; cook and stir 2 minutes longer.

Remove from the heat. Stir a small amount of hot mixture into egg yolks; return all to the pan, stirring constantly. Bring to a gentle boil; cook and stir 2 minutes longer. Remove from the heat. Gently stir in the lemon juice, butter and lemon peel.

Transfer to a bowl. Cool to room temperature without stirring. Cover surface with waxed paper; refrigerate until chilled.

In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and confectioners' sugar until smooth. Fold in whipped topping. Crumble the baked pecan mixture; set aside 1/2 cup for topping.

Just before serving, in a 3-qt. trifle bowl, layer 1 cup each pecan mixture, lemon mixture and cream cheese mixture. Repeat layers twice. Sprinkle with reserved pecan mixture. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 9 servings.

Lemon Crumb Muffins

- **6 cups all-purpose flour**
- **4 cups sugar**
- **3/4 teaspoon baking soda**
- **3/4 teaspoon salt**
- **8 eggs**
- **2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream**
- **2 cups butter, melted**
- **3 tablespoons grated lemon peel**
- **2 tablespoons lemon juice**

STREUSEL:

- **3/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- **3/4 cup sugar**
- **1/4 cup cold butter**

GLAZE:

- **1/2 cup sugar**
- **1/3 cup lemon juice**

In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking soda and salt. In another bowl, whisk the eggs, sour cream, butter, lemon peel and juice. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups three-fourths full.

In a small bowl, combine flour and sugar; cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over batter.

Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. In a small bowl, whisk glaze ingredients; drizzle over warm muffins. **Yield:** 40 muffins.

TASTE OF HOME April & May 2008

Lemon Cheesecake Dessert

- **2 cups graham cracker crumbs**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **1/2 cup butter, melted**

FILLING:

- **4 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened**
- **1-1/4 cups sugar**
- **1 package (3 ounces) lemon gelatin**
- **1 teaspoon lemon extract**
- **5 eggs, lightly beaten**

LEMON SAUCE:

- **1 package (2.9 ounces) cook-and-serve lemon pudding mix**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **2-1/2 cups cold water**

In a small bowl, combine cracker crumbs, sugar and butter. Press onto the bottom and 1 in. up the sides of a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Refrigerate.

In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add dry gelatin and lemon extract; beat 3 minutes longer. Add eggs; beat on low speed just until combined. Pour into crust.

Bake at 325° for 30-40 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

In a small saucepan, combine pudding mix and sugar. Gradually stir in water. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture comes to a boil. Cook and stir 1-2 minutes longer or until thickened. Transfer to a bowl. Cover surface with waxed paper; refrigerate until chilled. Serve with dessert. **Yield:** 12 servings (2 cups sauce).

TASTE OF HOME April & May 2008

Ham on Biscuits

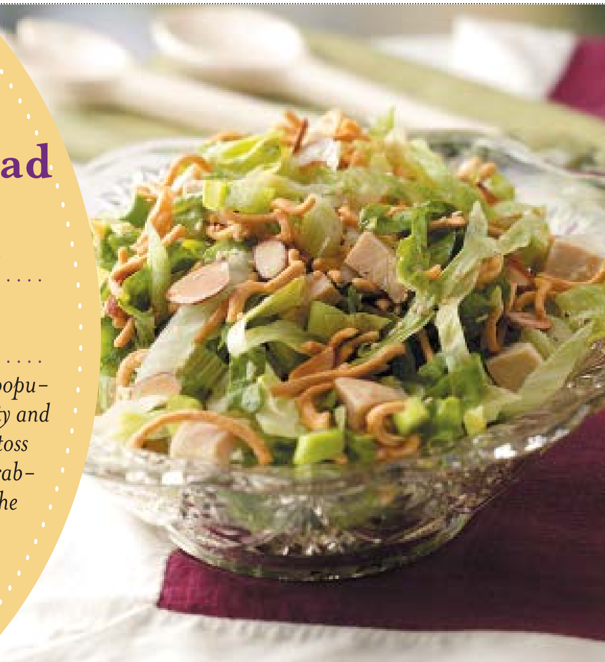


PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 min.

★ Betsy Hedeman
Timonium, Maryland

I enjoy entertaining friends at a luncheon. They always compliment me on these special sandwiches made on cheesy homemade biscuits. I use Smithfield ham, but if salty ham is not your preference, any thin-sliced ham works well.

Chow Mein Chicken Salad



PREP/TOTAL TIME: 20 min.

★ Betsy Hedeman
Timonium, Maryland

I shake up the dressing for this popular salad the day before the party and refrigerate it until I'm ready to toss the mixture. Flaked tuna and crabmeat are good alternatives for the chicken in this recipe.

Curried Carrot Soup



PREP: 15 min. | COOK: 30 min.

★ Betsy Hedeman
Timonium, Maryland

This pretty, pureed soup is perfect for a luncheon. Its wonderful flavor is sparked by curry, herbs and, of course, the colorful carrots.

Creamy Lime Sherbet



PREP: 20 min. + freezing

★ Betsy Hedeman
Timonium, Maryland

My luncheon guests are always impressed when I serve this smooth, refreshing dessert with a garnish of candied edible flowers. The sherbet's lime flavor is so pleasant!

FIELD EDITOR FAVORITES (P. 12)

Curried Carrot Soup

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 5 cups vegetable broth
- 4 medium carrots, grated (about 1-3/4 cups)
- 1-1/2 teaspoons curry powder
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, cubed
- 5 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Dash cayenne pepper, optional

In a large saucepan, saute onion in oil. Stir in the broth, carrots, curry, thyme and bay leaf. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 25-30 minutes or until carrots are tender.

Discard bay leaf. Cool slightly. Transfer half of the soup to a blender; add half of the cream cheese. Cover and process until smooth; return to the pan. Repeat with remaining soup and cream cheese. Heat through. Stir in the parsley, salt and cayenne if desired. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Creamy Lime Sherbet

- 2 cups milk
- 1-1/4 cups sugar
- 1/3 cup lime juice
- 1-1/2 teaspoons grated lime peel
- 2 to 3 drops green food coloring, optional
- 1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed

In a large saucepan, combine milk and sugar. Cook and stir over medium heat until sugar is dissolved and mixture reaches 175°. Refrigerate until chilled.

Stir in the lime juice, peel and food coloring if desired. Freeze in an ice cream freezer according to manufacturer's directions.

Transfer sherbet to a 2-1/2-qt. freezer container. Allow to soften slightly; fold in whipped topping. Freeze for at least 4 hours before serving. **Yield:** 1-1/2 quarts.

Ham on Biscuits

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1-1/8 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons cold butter
- 1/2 cup 4% cottage cheese
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 8 teaspoons butter, softened
- 1/2 pound sliced deli ham

In a small bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt; cut in cold butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In a small mixing bowl, beat cottage cheese for 2 minutes. Beat in egg and milk until blended. Stir into crumb mixture just until moistened.

Turn onto a lightly floured surface; knead 8-10 times. Pat or roll out to 1/2-in. thickness; cut out eight biscuits with a floured 2-1/2-in. biscuit cutter.

Place 1 in. apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 450° for 8-12 minutes or until golden brown. Split biscuits in half; spread with softened butter. Place ham on biscuit bottoms; replace tops. **Yield:** 8 sandwiches.

Chow Mein Chicken Salad

- 4 cups shredded lettuce
- 1 cup chow mein noodles
- 2/3 cup cubed cooked chicken breast
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 4 teaspoons sliced almonds, toasted
- 4 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted

VINAIGRETTE:

- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 4-1/2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

In a large salad bowl, combine the lettuce, chow mein noodles, chicken, onions, almonds and sesame seeds.

In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine the vinaigrette ingredients; shake well. Drizzle over salad; toss to coat. Serve immediately. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Sizzling Beef Kabobs

PREP: 20 min. + marinating
GRILL: 10 min.

Kathy Spang
Manheim, Pennsylvania

A mild soy sauce marinade lends an appealing flavor to these tender beef and veggie kabobs. With colorful chunks of yellow squash and sweet red and green peppers, they're perfect party fare.



Lattice Corn Pie

PREP: 25 min. BAKE: 35 min.

Kathy Spang
Manheim, Pennsylvania

This unique side dish is full of old-fashioned goodness, with tender diced potatoes and a fresh, sweet corn flavor. Once you've tasted this delicious pie, you'll never want to serve corn any other way!



Applesauce-Raspberry Gelatin Mold

PREP: 15 min. + chilling

Kathy Spang
Manheim, Pennsylvania

The children in our families especially enjoy this tangy, refreshing salad, and its pretty, bright red color makes it a festive addition to a special-occasion meal.

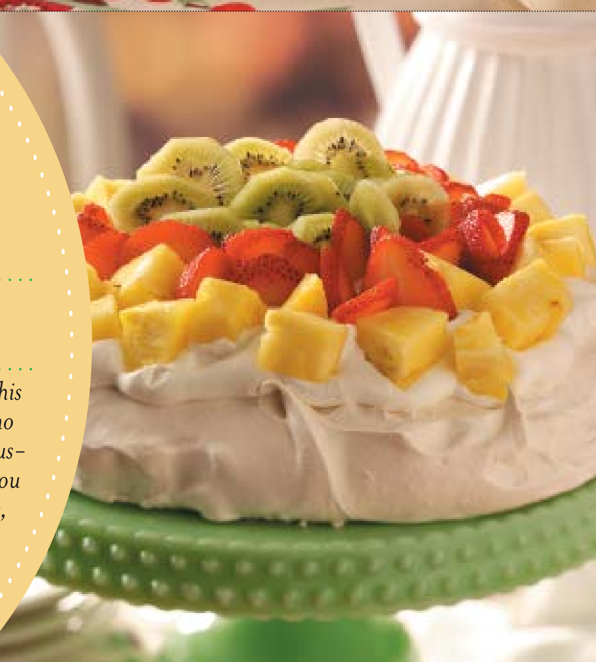


Pavlova

PREP: 25 min.
BAKE: 45 min. + standing

Kathy Spang
Manheim, Pennsylvania

My mother was taught to make this attractive dessert by my sister, who learned to prepare it from her Australian mother-in-law. When you beat the sugar into the egg whites, make sure that all the sugar is dissolved, or the pavlova will be sticky.



MOM'S BEST MEAL (P. 18)

Applesauce-Raspberry Gelatin Mold

- **3 cups unsweetened applesauce**
- **1/4 cup orange juice**
- **2 packages (3 ounces *each*) raspberry gelatin**
- **1-1/2 cups lemon-lime soda**

In a large saucepan, bring applesauce and orange juice to a boil. Remove from the heat; stir in gelatin until dissolved. Slowly add soda.

Pour into a 6-cup mold coated with cooking spray. Refrigerate until firm. Unmold onto a serving platter. **Yield:** 10 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1/2 cup equals 111 calories, trace fat (trace saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 44 mg sodium, 27 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 2 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 1 starch, 1/2 fruit.

TASTE OF HOME
April & May 2008

Pavlova

- **4 egg whites**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1 teaspoon white vinegar**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed**
- **2 cups sliced fresh strawberries**
- **2 cups cubed fresh pineapple**
- **2 medium kiwifruit, peeled and sliced**

Place egg whites in a large mixing bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Beat until foamy. Add vanilla and vinegar; beat until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, on high until stiff glossy peaks form and sugar is dissolved.

Spoon meringue onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Using the back of a spoon, shape into a 9-in. circle. Bake at 225° for 45-55 minutes or until set and dry. Turn oven off and do not open door. Let meringue dry in oven for 1 hour.

Just before serving, top meringue with whipped topping and fruit. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 slice equals 229 calories, 5 g fat (5 g saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 29 mg sodium, 42 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 3 g protein.

TASTE OF HOME
April & May 2008

Sizzling Beef Kabobs

- **1/3 cup canola oil**
- **1/4 cup soy sauce**
- **2 tablespoons red wine vinegar**
- **2 teaspoons garlic powder**
- **2 pounds boneless beef sirloin steak, cut into 1-inch pieces**
- **2 medium yellow summer squash, cut into 1/2-inch slices**
- **1 large onion, cut into 1-inch chunks**
- **1 large green pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces**
- **1 large sweet red pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces**

In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the oil, soy sauce, vinegar and garlic powder; add beef. Seal bag and turn to coat; refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Drain and discard marinade. On eight metal or soaked wooden skewers, alternately thread beef and vegetables. Grill, covered, over medium-hot heat or broil 4-6 in. from the heat for 8-10 minutes or until meat reaches desired doneness, turning occasionally. **Yield:** 8 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 kabob equals 227 calories, 12 g fat (3 g saturated fat), 63 mg cholesterol, 326 mg sodium, 6 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 23 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 3 lean meat, 1 vegetable, 1 fat.

TASTE OF HOME
April & May 2008

Lattice Corn Pie

- **1 cup diced peeled potatoes**
- **1/3 cup milk**
- **2 eggs**
- **2 cups fresh *or* frozen corn, thawed**
- **1 teaspoon sugar**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1 package (15 ounces) refrigerated pie pastry**

Place potatoes in a small saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 6-8 minutes or until tender. Drain and set aside.

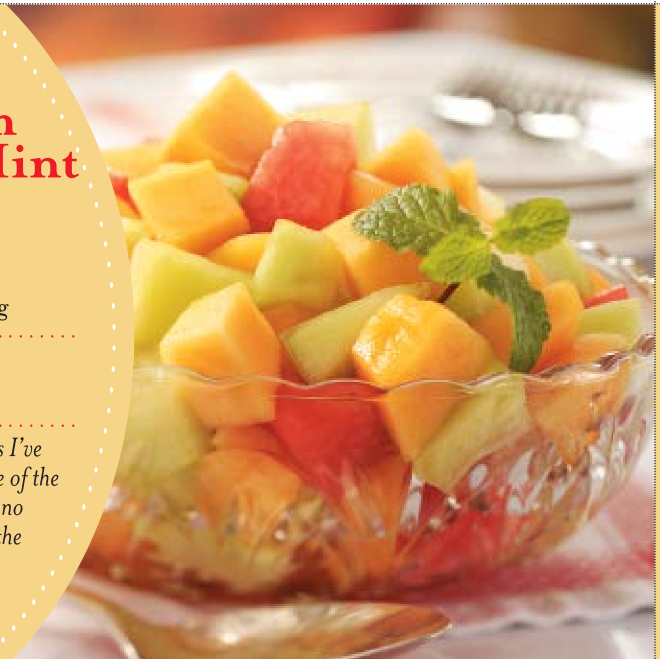
In a blender, combine the milk, eggs, corn, sugar and salt; cover and process until blended.

Line a 9-in. pie plate with bottom pastry; trim pastry even with edge of plate. Spoon potatoes into crust; top with corn mixture (crust will be full). Roll out remaining pastry; make a lattice crust. Seal and flute edges.

Bake at 375° for 35-40 minutes or until the crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly. **Yield:** 8 servings.

TASTE OF HOME
April & May 2008

Melon with Serrano-Mint Syrup



PREP: 30 min. + chilling

Jennifer Fisher
Austin, Texas

This is just one of the recipes I've developed to take advantage of the fresh mint I grow. The serrano pepper is a nice contrast to the sweetness of the syrup and salad.

Basil Tomato Juice

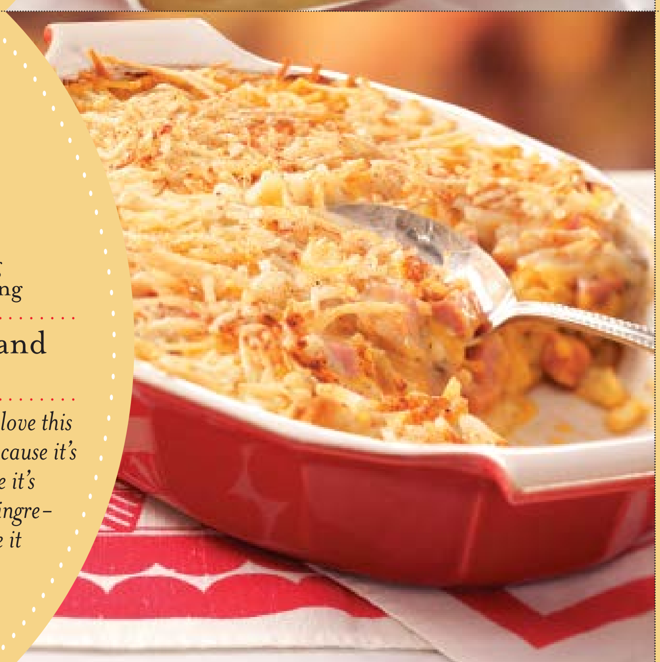


PREP: 20 min.
COOK: 55 min. + chilling

Bonnie Hawkins
Elkhorn, Wisconsin

Put some zing in your brunch buffet with this homemade tomato juice. Fresh basil and hot pepper sauce accent the garden-fresh tomato flavor. You can store it in containers in the freezer, if you wish.

Deluxe Breakfast Bake



PREP: 15 min. + chilling
BAKE: 65 min. + standing

★ LaVonne Hegland
St. Michael, Minnesota

My husband and three sons love this rich and creamy egg bake because it's so satisfying. I like it because it's versatile (you can alter the ingredients) and you can prepare it ahead of time.

Nut-Topped Strawberry Rhubarb Muffins



PREP: 25 min.
BAKE: 20 min. + cooling

Audrey Stallsmith
Hadley, Pennsylvania

A crispy topping highlights these muffins filled with two favorite spring foods. They're great for a grab-and-go breakfast.

POTLUCK PLEASERS (P. 17)

Deluxe Breakfast Bake

- 1 package (6 ounces) onion and garlic salad croutons
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1-1/2 cups cubed fully cooked ham
- 4 eggs
- 2-3/4 cups milk, *divided*
- 3/4 teaspoon ground mustard
- 1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- 1 package (26 ounces) frozen shredded hash brown potatoes, thawed
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Place croutons in a greased 3-qt. baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese and ham. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, 2-1/4 cups milk and mustard; pour over ham and cheese. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Combine soup and remaining milk until blended; spread over casserole. Top with hash browns; sprinkle with paprika and pepper.

Cover and bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Uncover; bake 35-40 minutes longer or until edges are browned. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving. **Yield:** 12 servings.

TASTE OF HOME
April & May 2008

Nut-Topped Strawberry Rhubarb Muffins

- 2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1-1/3 cups packed brown sugar
- 2-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped fresh strawberries
- 3/4 cup diced fresh *or* frozen rhubarb

TOPPING:

- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon cold butter

In a large bowl, combine the first six ingredients. In another bowl, whisk the egg, buttermilk, oil and vanilla. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in strawberries and rhubarb. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups two-thirds full.

In a small bowl, combine the pecans, brown sugar and cinnamon. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over batter.

Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. **Yield:** 1-1/2 dozen.

EDITOR'S NOTE: If using frozen rhubarb, measure rhubarb while still frozen, then thaw completely. Drain in a colander, but do not press liquid out.

TASTE OF HOME
April & May 2008

Melon with Serrano-Mint Syrup

- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup water
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1/2 teaspoon minced serrano pepper
- 1/4 cup minced fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon peel
- 4 cups *each* cubed watermelon, cantaloupe and honeydew

In a small saucepan, combine the sugar, water, lemon juice, honey and serrano pepper. Bring to a boil; cook for 3-5 minutes or until slightly thickened. Remove from the heat; stir in mint and lemon peel. Cool to room temperature.

Strain syrup; discard pepper, mint and lemon peel. In a large bowl, combine the melons. Add syrup; gently toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, stirring several times. Serve with a slotted spoon. **Yield:** 12 servings.

EDITOR'S NOTE: When cutting hot peppers, disposable gloves are recommended. Avoid touching your face.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 cup equals 92 calories, trace fat (trace saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 13 mg sodium, 25 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 1 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 1 fruit, 1/2 starch.

TASTE OF HOME
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Basil Tomato Juice

- 8 pounds ripe tomatoes, quartered
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh basil
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon hot pepper sauce

In a soup kettle, combine the tomatoes, celery and onion. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 45 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally.

Cool slightly; put tomato mixture through a sieve or food mill. Return to the pan. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Remove from the heat; cool. Transfer to a pitcher; cover and refrigerate until chilled. **Yield:** about 2-1/2 quarts.

NUTRITION FACTS: 3/4 cup equals 66 calories, 1 g fat (trace saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 215 mg sodium, 15 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 3 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGE:** 2 vegetable.

TASTE OF HOME
April & May 2008

Bacon Cheeseburger Buns

PREP: 1 hour + rising
BAKE: 10 min.

Marjorie Miller
Haven, Kansas

This is a fun way to serve bacon cheeseburgers to a gang without all the fuss of assembling sandwiches. These convenient packets can be dipped into ketchup or barbecue sauce.

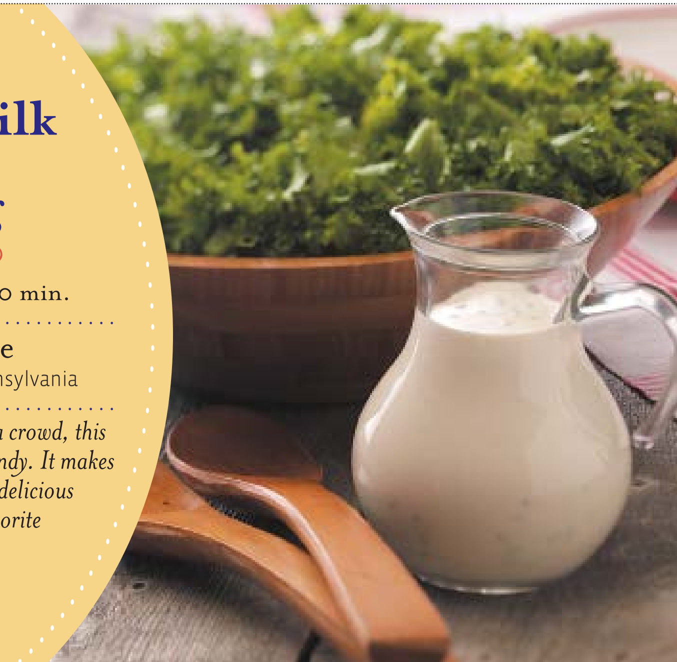


Buttermilk Salad Dressing

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 10 min.

★ Patricia Mele
Lower Burrell, Pennsylvania

When serving salad to a crowd, this easy recipe comes in handy. It makes a full quart of creamy, delicious dressing to toss with favorite greens and veggies.



Brownie Sundaes

PREP: 30 min.
BAKE: 25 min. + cooling

Carol Brandon
Uxbridge, Ontario

I serve this yummy dessert often at baseball barbecues or whenever I have a large group in. Homemade brownies and hot fudge sauce plus ice cream...you can't go wrong!



Strawberry Custard Pies

PREP: 35 min. + chilling

Caroline Park
Pritchard, British Columbia

These pies were a spring special at a restaurant where I used to work. When strawberries were in season, whoever was cook that day had to bake them first thing in the morning and again in the afternoon.



Brownie Sundaes

- 2 cups butter, cubed
- 32 squares (1 ounce *each*) semisweet chocolate
- 7 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 3/4 pound chopped walnuts, optional

HOT FUDGE SAUCE:

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, cubed
- 1 cup baking cocoa

Vanilla ice cream

Whipped cream and maraschino cherries, optional

In a large heavy saucepan, melt butter and chocolate over low heat; stir until smooth. Cool.

In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs and sugar on low speed until combined. Beat on medium-high until thickened and lemon-colored, about 12 minutes. Beat in vanilla and chocolate mixture. Fold in flour and salt just until blended (batter will be thick). Fold in walnuts if desired.

Transfer to two greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pans. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on wire racks for 15 minutes.

In a large saucepan, combine the cream, sugar and butter. Cook and stir until sugar is dissolved. Bring to a boil, without stirring. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 3 minutes. Cool for 3 minutes.

Place cocoa in a heat-proof bowl. Carefully whisk hot liquid into cocoa until smooth (do not scrape pan). Cut brownies into squares; serve with ice cream and hot fudge sauce. Garnish with whipped cream and cherries if desired. **Yield:** 4 dozen (2 cups sauce).

Strawberry Custard Pies

- 4-1/2 cups sugar
- 3/4 cup cornstarch
- 4-1/2 cups cold water
- 3 packages (3 ounces *each*) strawberry gelatin
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 6 packages (3 ounces *each*) cook-and-serve vanilla pudding mix
- 6 pastry shells (9 inches), baked
- 3 pounds fresh strawberries, halved

Whipped cream, optional

In a large saucepan, combine sugar and cornstarch; gradually stir in water until smooth. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Remove from the heat. Stir in the gelatin and lemon juice until the gelatin is dissolved. Cool to room temperature.

Prepare pudding mixes according to package directions. Pour into pastry shells. Top with strawberries. Carefully spoon gelatin mixture over berries. Refrigerate until set. Garnish with whipped cream if desired. **Yield:** 6 pies (8 servings each).

TASTE OF HOME
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Bacon Cheeseburger Buns

- 2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) active dry yeast
- 2/3 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
- 2/3 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup shortening
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 4-1/2 to 5 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

- 1 pound sliced bacon, diced
- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 pound process cheese (Velveeta), cubed
- 3 to 4 tablespoons butter, melted

Ketchup *or* barbecue sauce, optional

In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add milk, sugar, shortening, eggs, salt and 3-1/2 cups flour; beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.

Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Meanwhile, in a large skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp. Using a slotted spoon, remove to paper towels. In a Dutch oven, cook the beef, onion, salt and pepper over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Add bacon and cheese; cook and stir until cheese is melted. Remove from the heat.

Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide into fourths. Roll each portion into a 12-in. x 8-in. rectangle; cut each into six squares. Place 1/4 cup meat mixture in the center of each square. Bring corners together in the center and pinch to seal.

Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 9-11 minutes or until lightly browned. Brush with butter. Serve warm with ketchup if desired. **Yield:** 2 dozen.

Buttermilk Salad Dressing

- 2 cups buttermilk
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley flakes
- 1-1/2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon celery salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

In a large bowl, whisk all ingredients until smooth. Cover and refrigerate until serving. **Yield:** 4 cups.

TASTE OF HOME
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Chicken Asparagus Soup

PREP: 1 hour COOK: 45 min.

Sandy Clayton
Visalia, California

I have fond memories of chopping veggies and cooking with my Italian grandmother. This flavorful soup is a favorite recipe she made.



Lemon Ricotta Pancakes

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 min.

Marilyn Rodriguez
Fairbanks, Alaska

I'm a firm believer that recipes with rhubarb cannot be too plentiful. Here, it is featured in the sauce for lovely lemon pancakes. These are yummy for brunch.



Best Leg of Lamb

PREP: 15 min. + marinating
BAKE: 3-1/4 hours + standing

Karen McAshan
Kerrville, Texas

When Julia Child visited my cousin's winery, 20 years ago, for a TV segment, she prepared leg of lamb using these ingredients. She didn't give the amounts, but I've come close to re-creating the recipe.



Artichoke Ham Puffs

PREP: 20 min. COOK: 20 min.

Suzanne Merrill
Modesto, California

This recipe is wonderful for a special brunch with family or friends. With lots of cheese and chunks of ham, the filling is delicious and satisfying. I serve the puffs with fresh fruit and a sweet bread.



Best Leg of Lamb

- 1/3 cup minced fresh rosemary
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 8 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 bone-in leg of lamb (7 to 9 pounds), trimmed
- 1 cup chicken broth

In a small bowl, combine the first seven ingredients; rub over leg of lamb. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Place lamb, fat side up, on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 2 hours.

Add broth to pan; cover loosely with foil. Bake 1-1/4 to 1-1/2 hours longer or until meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, a meat thermometer should read 145°; medium, 160°; well-done, 170°). Let stand for 10-15 minutes before slicing. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 slice equals 246 calories, 11 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 120 mg cholesterol, 320 mg sodium, 2 g carbohydrate, trace fiber, 33 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 5 lean meat, 1/2 fat.

TASTE OF HOME
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Artichoke Ham Puffs

- 6 frozen puff pastry shells
- 1/2 pound sliced fresh mushrooms
- 6 tablespoons butter, *divided*
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon ground mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon minced fresh tarragon
- 2 cups milk
- 2-1/2 cups (10 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/8 teaspoon coarsely ground pepper
- 3 cups cubed fully cooked ham
- 1 can (14 ounces) water-packed artichoke hearts, rinsed, drained, patted dry and quartered

Bake pastry shells according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, saute mushrooms in 2 tablespoons butter for 3-4 minutes or until tender. Add the remaining butter; cook for 2-3 minutes over medium heat until melted.

Stir in the flour, mustard and tarragon until blended. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened.

Reduce heat to medium. Add cheese and pepper; cook and stir for 3-4 minutes or until cheese is melted. Remove from the heat; stir in ham and artichokes. Remove tops from pastry shells; fill with ham mixture. Replace tops. **Yield:** 6 servings.

TASTE OF HOME
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Chicken Asparagus Soup

- 2 pounds thin fresh asparagus
- 2 large potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 medium carrot, chopped
- 2 teaspoons dried parsley flakes
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cans (14-1/2 ounces *each*) chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper, *divided*
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 cups cubed cooked chicken
- 2 cups half-and-half cream
- Shaved Parmesan cheese, optional

Cut tips from asparagus spears; set aside. Place stalks in a large skillet; cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 40 minutes. Strain, reserving 4 cups cooking liquid. Discard stalks.

In a Dutch oven, saute the potatoes, onion, celery, carrot, parsley and garlic in oil until vegetables are tender. Stir in the broth, salt, 1/4 teaspoon pepper, bay leaf and reserved cooking liquid. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes. Discard bay leaf. Cool slightly.

In a blender, cover and puree soup in batches until smooth. Return to the pan. Add the chicken, cream, remaining pepper and reserved asparagus tips. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes or until asparagus is tender. Garnish with Parmesan cheese if desired. **Yield:** 10 servings (about 2 quarts).

Lemon Ricotta Pancakes

- 2 cups chopped fresh *or* frozen rhubarb
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel

For rhubarb sauce, combine the rhubarb, water and brown sugar in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes or until rhubarb is tender.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. In another bowl, combine the ricotta cheese, milk, lemon juice and peel. Stir into dry ingredients just until combined.

Drop batter by 2 tablespoonfuls onto a greased hot griddle. Cook over medium heat for 1-2 minutes on each side or until lightly browned. Serve with rhubarb sauce. **Yield:** 12 pancakes (1-1/3 cups sauce).

TASTE OF HOME
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oh-so-good quick breads

Easy to stir up...ready to enjoy in less time than yeast breads...and always a treat, quick breads are a natural choice for our new national recipe contest. Sweet or savory, they are great to serve with a meal or grab as a snack.

You likely have one or more recipes that stand a chance to win in *Taste of Home's* "Standout Quick Breads" competition! Our judges eagerly await bites of your big-hit breads that are leavened with baking powder or baking soda, not yeast.

So please take a minute to sort through your recipes and enter the loaves, coffee cakes, monkey breads and flat breads you enjoy most. We're looking for traditional favorites as well as recipes with delicious variations and twists. Consider sending us:

- Luscious sweet loaves flavored with chocolate, spiced with cinnamon, hearty with oats, peppered with poppy seeds or studded with nuts
- Fruity favorites featuring apples, apricots, bananas, berries, cherries, citrus, coconut, dates, mangoes, pears or pineapple
- Garden-fresh herb, rhubarb, squash or pumpkin breads
- Savory slices chock-full of cheese, sausage, onions, garlic, chives, peppers, pizza ingredients and such.

Please note that muffins are not included—they deserve a future contest of their own.

The "Standout Quick Breads" contest closes *June 15, 2008*. Winners will be featured in the Feb/Mar '09 issue. Send your entries soon!

Your best quick bread recipe could win $500!

Last Chance for Appetizers

Don't miss an opportunity to win a great prize in our "Party-Perfect Appetizers" contest. But you'll have to hurry—it closes *April 15, 2008*. What type of appetizers do you make that disappear fast at parties and potlucks? We'd love to consider your recipes for delicious dips, snappy spreads, can't-stop-eatin-'em snack mixes and fabulous finger foods. Hot or cold hors d'oeuvres qualify.

Enter on our Web site or E-mail entries to *recipes@tasteofhome.com*. Please write "Party-Perfect Appetizers" on the subject line and include your name and street address. Or send to "Party-Perfect Appetizers," Diane Werner, Food Director, 5925 Country Lane, Greendale WI 53129. See the contest rules at right for a general guide.



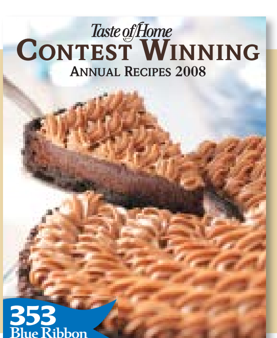
CONTEST RULES

Be sure to include the contest topic and your name, address and phone number on each recipe you submit.

It's easy to enter at *www.tasteofhome.com*. Click on "Submit a Recipe" to find a handy form with space for the contest title ("Standout Quick Breads"), ingredients, directions and comments. Be specific with measurements and sizes of cans, packages and pans. Please include a few words about the recipe and yourself.

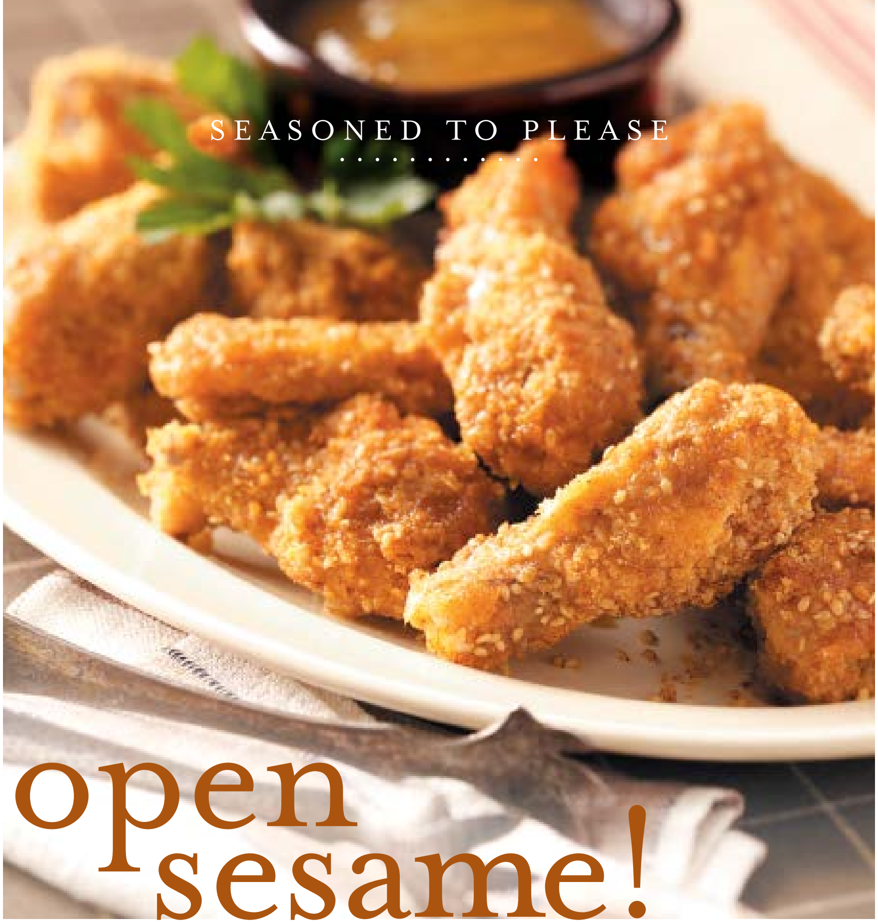
Or, type or print each recipe on one side of an 8-1/2- x 11-inch sheet of paper. Send entries to "Standout Quick Breads," Diane Werner, Food Director, 5925 Country Lane, Greendale WI 53129. Remember to include your name, address and phone number on each entry.

Entries become the property of Reiman Publications. Recipes that are not among the winners may be published in a future issue of *TOH*, in a cookbook or on our Web site (*www.tasteofhome.com*).



You could win a fabulous prize!

The Grand Prize winner of each issue's contest will receive $500 in cash. And the second-place finisher will win dinner for four at the restaurant of the winner's choice (a $150 value). Ten runners-up will each receive a free copy of our *Contest Winning Annual Recipes 2008* cookbook. So enter today!



open sesame!

Sesame seeds are one of the oldest seasonings known, dating back some 4,000 years. They lend a nutty flavor and crunch to breads and biscuits. Toasted, they give salads, chicken and other dishes a special touch. The ground seeds make a paste called tahini, used in making the Middle Eastern dish hummus.

And what does "Open sesame!" (the magic password from the tale of Ali Baba) have to do with the seeds? The phrase might have come about because sesame seed pods open with a pop that sounds like an unlocking door.

Food for Thought: Beware of anyone who offers you pie in the sky. What they are more likely to be after is your dough.

Sesame Chicken Wings

PREP: 15 min. | BAKE: 40 min.

Patrice Ehrlich
Merced, California

"These buttery wings, made with a bread crumb and sesame seed coating, 'fry' easily in the oven. I made a batch to serve at my sister's wedding. They're delicious hot or cold."

- **15 whole chicken wings**
- **3/4 cup dry bread crumbs**
- **2 tablespoons sesame seeds, toasted**
- **1 teaspoon paprika**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/3 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1/4 cup butter, melted**

Cut chicken wings into three sections; discard wing tip sections. In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the bread crumbs, sesame seeds, paprika and salt. Place cream in a shallow bowl. Dip chicken wings in cream, then place in the bag and shake to coat evenly.

Pour butter into a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish; add chicken, turning to coat. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 40-45 minutes or until juices run clear, turning every 10 minutes. **Yield:** 2-1/2 dozen.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This recipe was prepared with the first and second sections of the chicken wings.



Raspberry Cheesecake Pie

PREP: 30 min. + chilling

Audrey Armour
Thamesford, Ontario

Toasted sesame seeds add crunch to the crust of this luscious dessert. "Years ago, I led a homemaking course, and this pie was adapted from a recipe I used in the class."

- **3/4 cup graham cracker crumbs**
- **1/4 cup sesame seeds, toasted**
- **1/4 cup toasted wheat germ**
- **1/4 cup butter, melted**

FILLING:

- **1 tablespoon unflavored gelatin**
- **1/4 cup cold water**
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

TOPPING:

- **2 packages (10 ounces *each*) frozen sweetened raspberries, thawed**
- **2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- **1 teaspoon lemon juice**

In a bowl, combine the cracker crumbs, sesame seeds, wheat germ and butter. Press onto the bottom and up the sides of an ungreased 10-in. deep-dish pie plate. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool on a wire rack.

In a small saucepan, sprinkle gelatin over cold water; let stand for 1 minute. Cook and stir over low heat until gelatin is completely dissolved. Cool slightly.

In a small mixing bowl, beat cream until stiff peaks form; set aside. In another small mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and vanilla until smooth. Beat in gelatin mixture. Immediately fold in whipped cream. Pour into crust. Refrigerate.

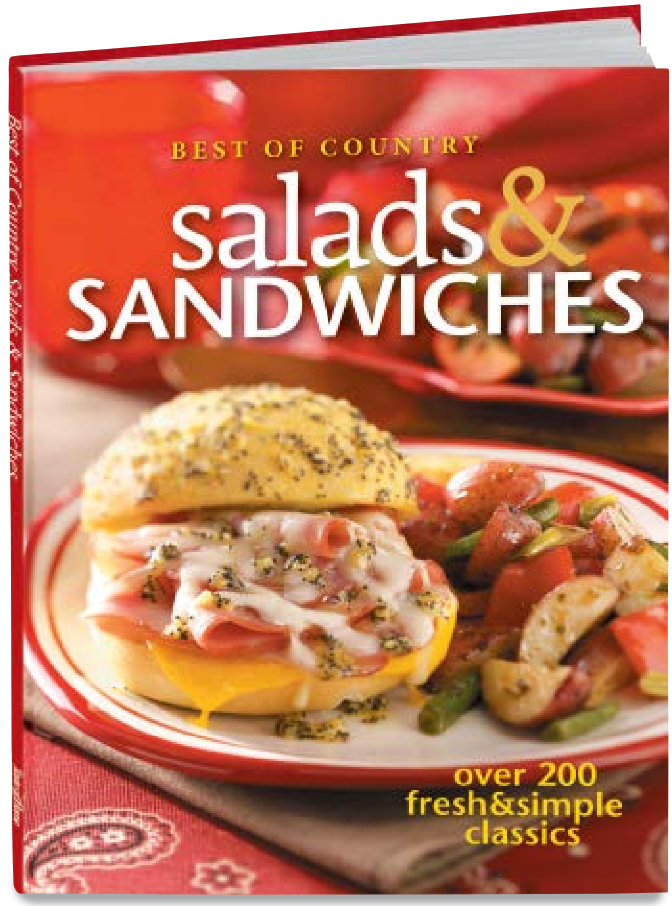
Meanwhile, drain raspberries, reserving juice in a 1-cup measuring cup. Add water to measure 1 cup. Set raspberries aside.

In a small saucepan, combine cornstarch and raspberry juice mixture until smooth. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Remove from the heat; gently stir in lemon juice. Cool for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Gently stir in raspberries. Spoon over pie. Refrigerate until set. **Yield:** 8 servings.

HERB FLAVOR BOOST. Find more tempting herb-enhanced recipes at *www.tasteofhome.com/plus.*

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style & substance

Home owner's handcrafted cabinets are the star of this convenient kitchen.

By Maurice Cummings
West Mansfield, Ohio

When we first laid eyes on our house, in 1993, it was in terrible shape, but I thought it had potential. Although the price was right, I figured it would be a hard sell for my wife, Vicki. She realized how badly I wanted it, though, and decided to bite the bullet.

The house had fleas, mice and roaches. In the winter, we couldn't get the temperature above 62 degrees due to all the cracks in the windows and doors. But after 14 years of work, we've turned the house into a home.

Because the kitchen was the

brosia maple, also called wormy maple. The wood has gray streaks, caused by a worm boring itself into the tree and killing that vein of the wood. If you look closely, you can see the wormholes, which make this wood unique.

The wood sat in the attic of the garage until we got the rest of the house the way we wanted it. Then I started planning and researching for the new kitchen. I wanted it to have more storage and counter space as well as step-saving features. Everything would be within 5 feet, and a lot of times, within arm's reach.

Custom Cupboards

I designed the lower cabinets with pull-out shelves and the corner cabinets with lazy Susans. All the drawers are self-closing. Two flip-out drawers in front of the sink hold sponges and pot scrubbers.



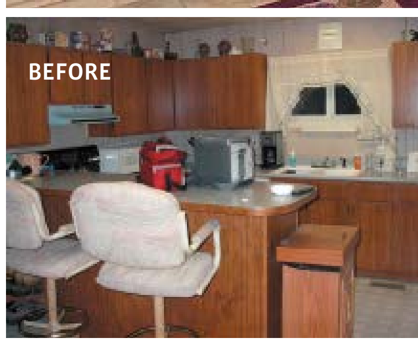


PHOTOS BY ROBERT HOCK

And there's a handy pull-out spice rack just to the left of the stove. I also built a trash can to match the cabinets with a drawer at the bottom to hold the bags.

For the floor and countertops, I chose sturdy, easy-to-clean ceramic tile, and we invested in stainless steel appliances. We have more than doubled our storage space, thanks in part to the large pantry, which has pegboard for hanging pots and pans.

Vicki loves pasta, so I tried to create a country Italian look, painting the walls



cranberry and the trim in a color called Pale Sunshine. Low-voltage, recessed lighting lends a soft glow to the collection of pots on top of the cabinets. And a wreath from my sister seems to pull everything together.

From Cabinetry to Cooking

The project was a lot of work but a lot of fun, too. It took about 3 to 4 months to build the cabinets and another 3 to 4 months to tear out and rebuild the kitchen. Now I'm ready to trade in my



Maurice Cummings rebuilt the couple's kitchen from top to bottom, including custom cabinets. To view a floor plan, visit our Web site at *www.tasteofhome.com/plus*.

hammer for an apron!

Ever since I built the cabinets, I've spent a lot of time in the kitchen canning fruits, making jellies, baking bread and preparing meals for my loving wife. She calls me a "gadget nut," and we have a lot of little gizmos that make cooking fun and effortless.

Vicki and I enjoy having family and friends over for card games and holiday celebrations, and the kitchen always seems to be the place where everyone congregates. It's big enough to entertain yet small enough to make everything convenient. It really fits our lifestyle!

Share your kitchen. If we feature your kitchen, we'll pay you $75. For Contributor Guidelines, see page 62.

Food for Thought: Where there's smoke, there's toast.



WILLIAM BISHOFF

if you like to cook and eat…

Travel with Taste of Home for a 'Slice of California'

It's a trip like no other, to see—and taste—California with other *Taste of Home* readers! Last fall, my sister-in-law and I joined one of our friendly "Slice of California" tour groups for this delicious 5-day adventure to the Santa Clara Valley and Monterey Coast.

Each day was packed with fun and flavor! We traveled with marvelous folks from 14 states, getting off the beaten path to visit with friendly local farmers, ranchers, cooks and business owners. Entertaining cooking programs featured at least one *Taste of Home* recipe as we sampled the area's finest foods!

Take a peek at a few photos from my album…then I hope you'll come along this summer or fall.

Sail Away with *Taste of Home*!

Or, get on board our 15th Anniversary Cruise, August 9-16, 2008. Departing from Boston with stops in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Maine, our luxury liner features a new culinary center for our cooking programs. Join us!

—Ann Kaiser, Editor, *Taste of Home*



Artichokes star at Ocean Mist Farms (top). Garlic chefs Bozzo and Sakahara give Editor Ann a taste (above). Fruit rancher Nita Gidzich (below) serves olallieberry pies.



As a *TOH* subscriber, get $50.00 off the California tour and $200.00 off the cruise (promotion code TH1H). Find details and more California photos at *www.countrytours.com*.



Cake-Like Cookies

Lately, the chocolate chip cookie recipe I've used for years bakes up cake-like, with little spread. I use butter in my recipe, but my cookies still do not have the texture my family loves. What could be wrong?

—Karen Gutknecht
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

It is frustrating when a cookie you've made for years is suddenly different. Since butter melts over a narrow temperature range, you've taken the first step toward a cookie with more spread. Here are more hints that might help:

✻ Even a tablespoon or two of extra flour can make cookies puffier. Measure by spooning the flour into a dry measuring cup. Fill the cup to overflowing, then sweep a metal spatula or flat side of a knife across the top.

✻ Spread can also be controlled through the temperature of the dough. Start with softened butter for creaming and room-temperature dough for baking.

✻ Finally, if you still are not satisfied with the spread after baking your first sheet of cookies, try adding 1 to 2 tablespoons of liquid, such as milk or water, to the remaining dough.

Oven Rack Confusion

Is there a rule of thumb on what position to place oven racks? I bake a lot of pies, cobblers, quick breads and cookies, but I never know if I should bake these items in the lower or middle part of the oven.

—Diane Haines
La Crescent, Minnesota

In general, position oven racks as close to the center of the oven as possible. When placed on the oven rack, the top of your baked goods should be in the center of the oven. With this in mind, cakes or breads in tube pans should be placed in the lower third of the oven.

To allow adequate circulation when using two oven racks at a time, stagger baking pans and allow at least 2 inches between pans and the sides of the oven.

"Sad Streaks" in Pound Cake

What causes a "sad streak" in a pound cake? I have made many good pound cakes over the years, but sometimes they have a gummy streak running through them. What causes this?

—Toby Fox
Lexington, North Carolina

It is not unusual for a wet, gummy layer to form on the bottom of pound cake. To prevent this, cream the butter and sugar thoroughly, about 5 minutes. Then add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Slowly adding the eggs will help create an emulsion. A well-emulsified batter will help produce a fine, evenly textured cake.

Easy-Bake Oven opens a door

Meet Cooking School Team Member: Michelle 'Red' Roberts

As a *Taste of Home* Cooking School culinary specialist in the Southeast, I've come back home. I'm originally from Eddiceton, in Mississippi, now one of my states.

Presenting Cooking School shows combines two things I love and know how to do—cooking and performing. My love of cooking started when I got my first Easy-Bake Oven from my big brother one Christmas—I must have been about 6 years old. I baked lots of cakes!

I grew up helping my grandmother in her kitchen and watching "The Frugal Gourmet," as well as Cajun cook Justin Wilson, on TV. Mother would joke about me having a cooking show one day; I watched food shows all the time.

I've been onstage in some sort of activity since I was 4—dancing, singing, acting or cheerleading.

I joined the Cooking School staff in 2002 after completing my culinary degree at Mississippi University for Women. My first 2 years were spent doing shows in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and western Pennsylvania. I met many wonderful people in that area—and they got a kick out of my Southern accent.

This spring, I'll again be doing shows—with a fabulous new menu of recipes—across Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, the Carolinas and Florida. Hope to see many of you there!

When I'm not on the road, I like to kick back at home in Calera, Alabama with my cats, "Simon" and "Madeline," and watch movies or read. I love the Stephanie Plum novels by Janet Evanovich and the Harry Potter books.

I also enjoy getting together with my mom, Dottie Roberts, and all of my family…there's always plenty of good food involved. It's fun to fix some of my favorite recipes for them. One they, too, thought was terrific is simple, savory Tomato Bacon Pie (right), a recipe shared with *Taste of Home* by Gladys Gibson of Hodgenville, Kentucky.



Tomato Bacon Pie

PREP: 15 min. | BAKE: 30 min.

Gladys Gibson
Hodgenville, Kentucky

- **1 unbaked deep-dish pastry shell (9 inches)**
- **3 medium tomatoes, cut into 1/4-inch slices**
- **10 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**
- **1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- **1 cup mayonnaise**

Bake pastry shell according to package directions; cool.

Place tomatoes in the crust; sprinkle with bacon. In a bowl, combine the cheese and mayonnaise. Spoon over bacon in the center of pie, leaving 1 in. around edge. Bake at 350° for 30-40 minutes or until golden brown (cover edges with foil if necessary to prevent overbrowning). **Yield:** 6 servings.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise is not recommended for this recipe.



Michelle Roberts (left) and eight other *Taste of Home* Cooking School culinary specialists will present entertaining and informative shows in more than 160 towns across the U.S. this spring. Check the schedule at *www.tasteofhome schools.com*.



JESSIE OLESON / CAKESPY.COM

Home Cooking "Down Under"

We moved to Australia, 7 years ago, and I brought all of my *TOH* issues with me—some very tattered by now. While I've had to adjust ingredients here and there, I just love going back through them to try a new recipe or two. My dishes are always a hit with my Aussie friends! Thanks for a fantastic magazine and for the Web site, which is great as well!

—Marcia Corsiglia
Sanctuary Lakes, Victoria, Australia

A Welcome Change

I've been a subscriber to your magazine for several years and just wanted to tell you how much I'm enjoying the new format in the Feb/Mar magazine. It seems as though there are even more delicious recipes in this issue, and I'm eager to try them! The hidden cupcake is a nice change from the toothpick.

You've got a terrific magazine that just keeps getting better! Good work!

—Patricia Cornell
Burlington, Kentucky



For Peeps' Sake!

Thank you so much for the Peeps Sunflower Cake recipe (Feb/Mar). My daughter Dana, 4, loves Peeps. When I showed her the cake, she could not wait to make it. It was easy and turned out great! Both my kids had fun helping. We can't wait for the next issue!

—Trina Shaw
Atlantic, Pennsylvania

Chocolaty Cover Story

The Layered Mocha Cheesecake on *Taste of Home's* Feb/Mar cover was delicious! My brother-in-law, Bill, made it for a family get-together. He has been making cheesecakes for several years, but this was his best. Thanks for all your great recipes.

—Kristi Briles
Loveland, Colorado



CONTRIBUTOR GUIDELINES

Want to send in your favorite recipe or handy tip, fun idea or photo to share with other readers? We'd love to hear from you. Here's how to get involved:

1. It's easy to send us recipes and other submissions! Simply use the convenient form on our Web site, ***www.tasteofhome.com***. Or you can E-mail them to ***editors@tasteofhome.com***. If you have a particular department or feature in mind, please type it in the subject line of your E-mail message.

2. When sending recipes, please be specific with directions, measurements and sizes of cans, packages and pans. Also, please share a few words about the recipe and yourself. (For recipe contest entries, please follow the directions on page 53.)

3. After you submit materials, please be patient. Due to the large volume, it can take our small staff several months to review materials. We may hold your material without informing you, but we will let you know if we publish something you submitted. Materials that won't fit in ***Taste of Home*** may be considered for our Web sites, cookbooks, promotions and other publications.

4. By submitting material for publication, you grant Reiman Media Group, Inc., its parent company, subsidiaries, affiliates, partners and licensees use of the material, including your name, hometown and state.

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5. To send submissions via regular mail, please address them to: ***Taste of Home***, 5925 Country Lane, Greendale WI 53129. If you have a particular department in mind, please print it on the front of the envelope. You can send recipe cards or photocopies of family cookbooks, and they can be hand-printed or typed on a sheet of paper...whatever is easiest for you. If you would like mailed materials returned, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

6. Sending photos? We accept 35mm color prints or high-resolution digital photos. Please submit digital images as jpegs at 300 dpi.

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(Continued on page 64)

field editor spotlight



Peggy Key

GRANT, ALABAMA

Family stats: Husband Dalford, retired; one son, Wesley. Peggy is a substitute teacher.

"I grew up in the kitchen. My mother taught my two sisters and me. We grew a vegetable garden and learned to store vegetables and meat for winter.

"Although I do not do as much cooking now as I did when our son lived at home and Dalford worked every day, I still love searching for new recipes. I try out many of them on fellow teachers.

"I'm active in our church and a member of the Red Hat Society. I always have a cross-stitch project in the works."



Andrea Bolden

UNIONVILLE, TENNESSEE

Family stats: Husband William, four grown children and two grandchildren. Andrea works at a cosmetics factory.

"When my husband and I got married, 26 years ago, I had a 4-year-old and an 8-year-old, and he had an 8-year-old and a 10-year-old who stayed with us on weekends. Plus, I frequently hosted my two young nieces. So, of course, my love of cooking was a good thing.

"Because I sometimes work long hours, I often depend on my slow cooker and make-ahead meals.

"On weekends from April to October, you'll find us at horse shows, and we also do a lot of tailgating."

Kentwood; **Marcy Cella**, L'Anse; **Sondra Bergy**, Lowell; **Virginia Ferris**, Lyons; **Geraldine Grisdale**, Mt. Pleasant; **Shirley Beachum**, Shelby; **Jessie Strobbe**, Smiths Creek; **Kathy Dorman**, Snover; **Marsha Ransom**, South Haven; **Christina Till**, South Haven; **Dona Erhart**, Stockbridge; **Winifred Winch**, Wetmore

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HIDE & SEEK

Help! Our Tiny Taco Is Lost

You could win one of our big, new cookbooks!

With as much Mexican food as we tested for this issue's Cinco de Mayo feature (page 14), it's no wonder we lost track of one cute little taco, "Tomás." Can you help us find him?



As many of you know, we like to have a little fun in *TOH* by having you search for a hidden drawing.

Last issue, it was a sweet mini cupcake. So to add a savory challenge, we've hidden a taco this time. The drawing is hidden somewhere in every copy of this April/May issue and looks like the taco shown here (this one is just an example).

We've concealed a taco elsewhere. It may be tucked in a photo, in a drawing, in an article or recipe—and it could be a different size.

Find the taco and enter the "Hide & Seek" contest on our Web site. Or, mail a postcard with the correct page number and your name, address and phone number to Hide & Seek, *Taste of Home*, 5925 Country Lane, Greendale WI 53129. We'll combine all entries (on-line and mail) to conduct a random drawing in mid-May.

WHERE WAS THE CUPCAKE HIDDEN? IN THE FEB/MAR ISSUE, IT WAS ON THE HINT OF MINT RECIPE CARD PHOTO ON PAGE 35.

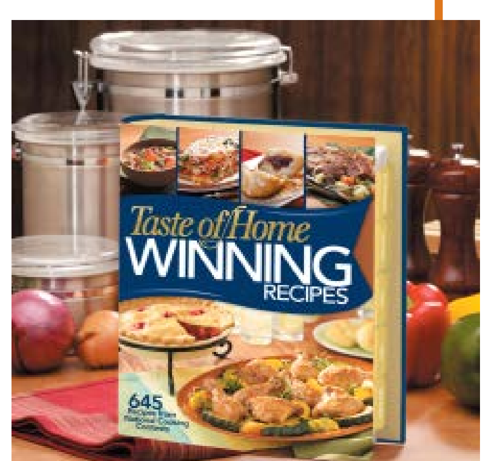
Get In on Our Cookbook Drawing!

The big, new *Taste of Home Winning Recipes* compiles all the best from our contests—645 award-winning recipes tested and judged by the food editors and Test Kitchen professionals here at *Taste of Home*.

Twenty-five of these hardcover five-ring-binder cookbooks will be given as top prizes in our "Hide & Seek" contest drawing this time.

Every recipe in the cookbook features a mouth-watering color photo and easy-to-follow directions. The binder lies flat for easy use and features handy tab dividers—with an alphabetical index on each one—so you can flip to any of 17 scrumptious chapters and quickly find the recipe you want.

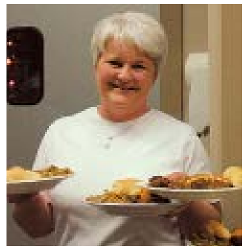
Look for *Taste of Home Winning Recipes* wherever books are sold; suggested retail price is $29.99.



75 More Winners Get a Soup Cookbook!

The next 75 winners will receive a copy of our *Best of Country Soups*, with 199 recipes for heartwarming soups, chili and chowders. Even if your name isn't drawn, you can learn more about how to purchase these items by logging on to *www.tasteofhome.com/links*.

Taste of Home **Cooks Who Care**





Molly Lloyd (far left) and her family work crew pause for a moment of prayer (below left) before serving a banquet at Belltower Mission. They rehabbed an old church for the nonprofit business.



lots cookin' at Belltower Mission

Family-run catering business gives away profits.

With the help of hardworking family members and hundreds of volunteers, Molly Lloyd of Bainbridge, Ohio has shown how a catering business can touch hearts, not just stomachs.

She and her siblings have converted an abandoned church in nearby Bourneville into Belltower Mission, a banquet facility for weddings and other gatherings. Every dollar minus costs goes to missions and the community.

"There's nothing fancy; it's all home-style food," says Molly. "My sister-in-law Denise Litter and I do most of the cooking, using our own recipes." Twice-baked potatoes, baked steak, Pecan-Crusted Chicken (right), homemade rolls and fruit pies are on the menu.

"Since opening in 2004, we've served more than 20,000 people."

Belltower Mission supports Campus Crusade for Christ and a "church planter" in Africa, several children's charities and other special needs.

A Good Cook's Inspiration

Molly looks back to 2001, when she prepared meals as a fund-raiser for a youth group mission trip. Soon other groups began asking her to cater.

She recalls, "One day, I saw a 'for sale' sign outside an old, vacant Presbyterian church. I heard God say, 'I'll give you this building for your mission.' "

Molly, her sister and three brothers (who own a construction company) purchased the church in 2003 and began extensive renovation. Nine months later, Belltower Mission opened. Family members Mark, Denise, Joe, Kim, Art, Ann and Laura Litter, along with Molly's husband, Byron, help cook, shop, decorate, serve and clean up. Leftovers are boxed up as meals for the elderly.

Says Molly, "The community's reaction has been wonderful. And many who have received help have since come to volunteer at Belltower Mission."



Pecan-Crusted Chicken

PREP: 25 min. | BAKE: 15 min.

- **1/4 cup milk**
- **1/2 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 cup finely chopped pecans**
- **2 tablespoons sesame seeds**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons paprika**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons pepper**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **8 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (4 ounces *each*), flattened slightly**
- **2 tablespoons canola oil**

Place milk in a shallow bowl. In another shallow bowl, combine the flour, pecans, sesame seeds, paprika, pepper and salt. Dip chicken in milk, then coat in flour mixture.

In a large nonstick skillet, brown chicken in oil on both sides. Transfer to a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 15-20 minutes or until juices run clear. **Yield:** 8 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 chicken breast half equals 214 calories, 10 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 63 mg cholesterol, 252 mg sodium, 5 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 24 g protein. **DIABETIC EXCHANGES:** 3 very lean meat, 1-1/2 fat.

Cooking Outreach: If you or a group you belong to cooks for a charitable, spiritual or other purpose, tell us about it at cookswhocare@tasteofhome.com. For Contributor Guidelines, see page 62.

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On the Menu for our June/July issue...

- Great **meals to grill**—succulent ribs, chicken and seafood skewers are just a few of the big selection.
- An **Ice Cream Social** with recipes for outstanding homemade ice cream, gelato, sauces and other goodies.
- Prize-winning recipes from our **"Corn Is King" contest** to help you enjoy this popular veggie on and off the cob.
- Summer **salads and sandwiches** to make casual dining especially delightful this season...**and more!**

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